THE ARYAN PATH

Point out the "Way"—however dimly, and lost among the host—as does the evening star to those who tread their path in darkness.

—*The Voice of the Silence*

VOL. XI OCTOBER 1940 No. 10

THE ANCIENT MESSAGE OF BHĪSHMA

"For his eternal salvation, the devout worshipper, with mind withdrawn from everything else and casting off all desires, beholds Thee, O Govinda, that art the Pure Soul, in his own soul."

Such were the words spoken by Bhīshma as he lay on his bed of arrows; with a pure heart, joined hands and concentrated attention he meditated on Krishna, the Master of Yoga; ere he cast off his wounded body the grandsire of the Bhāratas hymned in cheerful and strong voice the praise of the Supreme Man "of unfading prowess, attired in yellow robes of the colour of the Atasi flower". While the devotee was thus engaged the Master Krishna responded: seated on a sofa adorned with gold and gems, attired in yellow robes of silk, decked with many celestial ornaments, Krishna blazed with splendour. His bosom adorned with the Kaustubha gem, he looked like the Udaya mountain bathed by the rising sun. Yudhishthira, it is recorded in the *Shantiparvan*, calling upon Krishna, found him thus, plunged in deep meditation. Surprised that such a Lord as Krishna should be engaged in rapt contemplation, Yudhishthira enquired and was told: "Bhīshma, lying on his bed of arrows, who is like unto a fire that is about to go out, is thinking of me. Hence my mind also became concentrated on him. Bhīshma sought my refuge; therefore, I centred my mind upon him." Further, Krishna told Yudhishthira: "When Bhīshma disappears from the world every kind of knowledge will disappear with him. Go to him now, question him about whatever you may desire to learn."

To Yudhishthira and a great concourse Bhīshma spoke at length on the vital subject of Dharma. The noble ethics of his great speech are part of India's priceless inheritance and its message is for us of the twentieth century as much as it was for those of old times. It is natural, therefore, that invited by the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute of Poona Dewan Bahadur Krishnalal M. Jhaveri, M.A., LL.B., should have selected as his subject "The Ethic Discourses of Bhīshma". The occasion was the presentation to the Rajasaheb of Aundh of the newly published *Udyogaparvan* of the *Mahābhārata*. As is well-known, the

Institute is engaged in the noble and laborious task of publishing a critical edition of that great epic and is issuing it in parts. The presentation of the *Udyogaparvan* to the Ruler of Aundh at the hands of Dewan Bahadur K. M. Jhaveri was most appropriate; among the very few Rajas who are trying to establish a righteous form of administration in their States Shrimant Bala Saheb Pant Pratinidhi is one who sets a shining example; he has already introduced a democratic form of government in his State and in doing so he has not overlooked the principles of olden days, for he is a lover of the ancient Indian culture. On the occasion of this presentation our esteemed friend Dewan Bahadur K. M. Jhaveri read a paper under the above-named title and we take pleasure in printing the major portion of it below.

Dewan Bahadur Jhaveri is a well-known Gujarati author, whose *Milestones in Gujarati Literature* was reviewed in our magazine for February 1939. So far back as 1902 he contributed a study in the *Mahābhārata* on "Krishna, the Hindu Ideal" to *East and West*, edited by the celebrated social reformer B. M. Malabari. In this paper he gives our readers the benefit of his study of the *Shantiparvan*, emphasising the teachings of high ethics which rulers, soldiers and administrators can practise even to-day, and should. At the beginning of the Kali-Yuga, under the inspiration of Shri Krishna, the venerable Bhīshma laid down principles of conduct which if applied would save the present-day West from the impending destruction. For that purpose the ideas advanced in the following paper as well as others to be found in the great discourse need to be studied and reflected upon. Here is Dewan Bahadur Jhaveri's address :—

THE ETHIC DISCOURSES OF BHĪSHMA

Year before last I had occasion to go through the *Shantiparvan* ; when Professor Edgerton delivered a public lecture about it at the rooms of the Royal Asiatic Society, Bombay Branch, I had to preside over it as one of the Vice-Presidents of that Society. When reading it, I was struck with certain aspects of the *Parvan* and hence I have thought of saying a few words before you about them.

The *Mahābhārata* is not only a heroic poem, it also deals with various phases of human life and human nature, besides mere heroism on the battle-field. We come across in this great work the teachings of many exponents of the philosophy of life and action ; but amongst them Bhīshma takes the premier place, and the *Parvan* where he is at his best is the *Shantiparvan*. It is the gem in the whole crown. Bhīshma has uttered there certain truths which are eternal, effective for all time. The advice he gives and the methods he advocates are found to be useful whatever the age or the Yuga. He

"deals with the perpetual recurrent situations of life which are as real and as true to-day as they were ten thousand years ago and (what is more advises us to adopt a spiritual mood towards them)."—(Foreword by Sir S. Radhakrishnan to *The Mahābhārata as a History and a Drama* by Rai Pramathnath Mullick Bahadur).

The *Shantiparvan* as we find it to-day is full of repetitions, contradictions, inconsistencies and absurdities ; that is the bane of all editions of the *Mahābhārata*, excepting the parts published by the

Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute. But still, what remains—after weeding them all out, using one's common-sense—is full of practical, worldly wisdom : wisdom acquired during Bhīshma's long life of one hundred years—because that is stated to have been his age when he was lying on his bed of arrows waiting for the hour of his death—wisdom which far exceeds that of Seneca or of Socrates.

The circumstances under which an appeal for light and guidance was made to him by Yudhishthira are familiar to all Hindus. The great fight was over ; the Pandavas had entered Hastinapur, and Yudhishthira was duly installed on the *Gadi*, much against his will, as he wanted to go to the forest to make amends for the great sin committed by him in killing his kinsmen. It was then that Krishna intervened and asked Yudhishthira to take full benefit of the great experience and knowledge of the Patriarch, before he left the world, and to learn from him all that ought to be learnt by a king about (1) religion, (2) morals, (3) statesmanship, (4) diplomacy, (5) politics and (6) domestic life, for of all persons then alive Bhīshma was the foremost in conversance with morality and duty. Yudhishthira accepted Krishna's advice and sat at the feet of Bhīshma day after day till all his questions were answered and the discourse was finished.

Evidently Yudhishthira attached the greatest importance to kingly duties and asked his grandsire first to discourse on them. He said,

" The science of kingly duties is the refuge of the whole world of life. O thou of Kuru's race, Morality, Profit and Pleasure are dependent on kingly duties. It is also clear that the practices that lead to emancipation are equally dependent on them. As the reins are in respect of the steed, or the iron hook in respect of the elephant, even so the science of kingly duties constitutes the reins for checking the world."—(*Shanti-parvan, Adhyāya* 46, *Slokas* 2-5 as translated by Pratap Chandra Roy, Vol. I, p. 168)

In his opinion, it was the masterkey which would open the locks on the doors of all branches of knowledge, and hence he supplicated Bhīshma to enlighten him on that problem. It is not possible to condense within the limits of an address the advice given by Bhīshma, but a reply or two may be quoted which tersely but effectively sum up the situation. He says :—

" Just as a woman who is going to become a mother disregards objects most dear to her for preserving the child in the womb, even so kings should behave themselves for the good of their subjects." —(*Adhyāya* 46, *Sloka* 45)

A sound and statesmanlike piece of advice which holds good for all times. One of the kingly duties is to fight enemies, be they the enemies of Dharma or of the State. The discourse on the methods of warfare against them sets out such sound principles, and of such abiding truth that, human nature being what it was in those times and what it is in these, that is, being identical, unchanged, they hold good to-day ; nay, they are even followed by the combatants in the present European war. Side by side with his advice on the constitution of a Parliament of Advisers and an inner Cabinet, and on the qualifications of their members, he does not forget to mention such minor details as that the king should take care to discharge his municipal duties by inspection of old and dilapidated houses.—(*Adhyāya* 48, *Slokas* 4-7)

He then instructs him as to how to

fight with the enemy. Bhīshma is a great advocate of fighting a fair and righteous battle ; one should not hit one's foe below the belt ; nor should a male fight with a female.

"If the enemy comes clad in mail, his opponent should put on mail....A car-warrior should proceed against a car-warrior. One should not on horseback proceed against a car-warrior. When an antagonist has fallen into distress he should not be struck ; poisoned and barbed arrows are the weapons of the wicked and should not be used." —(*Adhyāya* 95)

There are a number of such *Sutras* meant for a righteous foe and a righteous fight. But "if the enemy fights aided by deceit, he should be met with the aid of deceit." The institution of having spies in the enemy's camp and country is as old as the *Mahābhārata*. Hitler's Fifth Column tactics are not an innovation, nor are his other ways of fighting. How to take the enemy by surprise and to employ all means unknown to him is part of war ethics, on the principle that all is fair in war. But humane conduct towards the foe is always emphasized by Bhīshma.

"A weak or wounded man should not be slain, or one that is sonless (a direction peculiar to the Aryan Hindu) ; or one whose weapon has been broken.... A wounded opponent should either be sent to his own home, or if brought to the victor's quarters should have his wounds attended to by skilful surgeons." —(*Adhyāya* 95, *Sloka* 12)

The six principal duties of a sovereign, as far as the waging of war is concerned, are thus set out :—(i) To make peace with a foe if he is found stronger (*sandhi*) ; (ii) to wage war against one of equal strength (*vigraha*) ; (iii) to invade territory belonging to one who is weaker (*yanu*) ; (iv) to withdraw skilfully in face of danger (*asana*)—(as the British Forces did from Dunkirk in the present war and from Gallipoli in the last) ; (v) to seek protection and safety in one's own fort when one is weak and is invaded by superior forces (*samshraya*) ; (vi) to sow dissensions among the chief officers of the enemy (*dvaidhi bhava*).—(*Adhyāya* 57, *Sloka* 16)

Brihaspati's as well as Shukra's *Nītishāstra* and Kautilya's *Arthashāstra* follow the same lines, but they are all based on the principles enunciated by Bhīshma.—(*Adhyāya* 59)

Apart from the war, the duties of a king in peace time are so minutely set out as to form an extensive treatise in itself. "Protection of the subject, O Yudhishthira, is the very cheese of kingly duties." Thus does Bhīshma inaugurate the series of his discourses. To be able to discharge that duty, a king has to be in touch with the life lived by his subjects. One of the modes of achieving this is the employment of spies, who should be men looking like idiots or like those that are blind and deaf. They should be full of wisdom and able to endure hunger and thirst. Spies should be set on the counsellors, the friends and even the sons of the king.—(*Adhyāya* 58) The king is enjoined, if he is to reign as a king in the true sense of the word, to take care of the following things :—(i) his own self, (ii) his counsellors, (iii) his treasury, (iv) his machinery for awarding punishment, (v) his friends, (vi) his provinces and (vii) his capital.—(*Bhīshma and His Teachings*. By M. N. Dutt, p. 183)

A large portion of Bhīshma's discourse is assigned to the science of chastisement—*Dandaniti*—and distinctions are drawn between punishments meted out to the four castes of society

prevalent then. The Brāhman, as the one who lays down the law, contrives to escape with next to no punishment at all for even heinous offences—an instance of that phase of human nature which is always partial to self. This part of the discourse draws for us a picture of the social life of the people then, and we find that drink-shops, public women, pimps, actors, gamblers and keepers of gaming-houses existed even then. They were considered sources of social disorder, and Bhīshma suggests means to check the distress they create.

A king cannot rule without ministers or counsellors ; he has need of friends ; but even in their case the king should make extreme caution his watchword ; he is asked not to trust them implicitly. Everyone should be trusted as well as mistrusted. The characteristics and qualifications of ministers are given in detail but even the most loyal of them is not exempted from liability to be mistrusted. A minister should be well-born, incapable of being won over by bribes or by other means, one who would live with the king and advise his master. One who possesses wisdom and goodness and who knows the duties of a king can provide for future events and contingencies, never grieves for what is past and knows the virtues of time. A king should engage servants who would share his griefs and joys, would try to be agreeable to him, would devote attention to the accomplishment of his objects and would be faithful and loyal to him. A king's income and revenue should be managed and supervised by contented and trustworthy men who know how to increase the finances. A king should look after his treasury with great care and should try to add to it—his barns should be always full of corn, and his effort should ever be to increase the quantity. A great king and a true king is never heedless or unrighteous.

We all know about the noble conduct of Shivaji when the daughter of his Mohammedan opponent fell into the hands of his soldiers and was brought to him as a prize of war. He did not keep her in his harem ; he consulted her wishes and accordingly sent her back to her father. The germ of that kingly and generous behaviour is to be found in the advice of Bhīshma that if a king succeeded in bringing a maiden from the house of the vanquished foe, he should keep her for a year in his palace and ask her whether she would wed him or any one else. If she did not agree, she should at once be sent back.

To Yudhishthira's question whether a slayer of men, a king who wages war, can gain the regions of bliss, Bhīshma answers that by chastising the wicked, by performing sacrifices and by giving away gifts, kings become pure and virtuous. The reclaimer of a field for the purpose of reclaiming it takes up both paddy blades and weeds, but the king instead of destroying the paddy blades makes them grow more vigorously.

The section that is taken up with advice on the leading of troops states everything that is necessary for the selection of military roads and camp sites ; as to who should form the van and who the rear and how the troops should be arranged when a sortie is to be made. When a small army has to fight a large force, he says, an array called *suchimukha* —needle-mouthed—should be formed forthwith (soldiers should be so drawn up as to form a wedge-like appearance with a narrow head) and in order to keep up the morale and the spirits of the soldiers the leaders should cry, " There,

there, the enemy is broken! No fear, fresh friends have arrived!" Modern armies use all these devices.

Hitler's grievance against the Treaty of Versailles is that the victors sought so completely to break the back of the vanquished that the latter could not rise again. According to him, it was the act of barbarians. What is Bhīshma's advice in such a case? How should a victor, according to him, behave towards his broken foe? He cites in support of his own advice the words of the wise, and says that a king should only break the strength of his enemies—he should never, when the opportunity comes, persecute his enemies, the reason being that a foe may become a friend, sooner or later. A king should never do such an injury to his foe as would rankle in the latter's heart.—(*Adhyāya* 103, *Sloka* 19)

After summarizing the duties of a king, including the ethics of war, principles of statesmanship, governance and successful administration of his kingdom in its various departments, Bhīshma discourses on the state of society existing in his time, which, of course, was the reflection of the mode of life followed from the days prior to his. He describes the spheres of work and the duties of the four *Varṇas* (castes), of which the Sudra formed the bottom and the Brāhman the top, more puissant and powerful than the reigning king, immune from every penalty and punishment, but at the same time expected to lead an austere life of self-control and to be a paragon of virtue and the premier preceptor, learned and exemplary in behaviour, in justification of the high position assigned to him. Much of this discourse seems strange and artificial to us at present.

This is followed by a discussion of the four *Āsramas* or modes of life—the *Brahmacharya*, the *Gārhasthya*, the *Vānaprasthya* and the *Sannyāsa* (*Adhyāya* 191, 192), all of which are held in great respect and looked upon as ideals but have never been observed in practice for hundreds of years. In fact, it is the opinion of scholars that even then changes were imminent and that the Pandavas were very closely identified with the great work of reclamation in India. The India of that age was ripe for change in administration and in regard to social, civil, political and religious matters, and the progress of this great story with its wonderful characters like Yudhishthira, a true ideal king and man, and Draupadi, typifying in her *Svayamvara* the high place which women had in India, unfolds the preparation towards the change in social structure which came later.—(The *Mahābhārata as a History and a Drama*, by Rai Pramathnath Mullick Bahadur)

Bhīshma was striving really for the moral and political regeneration of India, teaching the science of morality; discourses on truth, sin, ignorance, self-restraint, penance, wrath, lust, friendship, malevolence, wickedness, self-control, sinfulness, and righteousness nearly fill up the time left to him on this earth.

The goal of human life is the attainment of tranquillity (*shānti*) which will ultimately lead to emancipation. This tranquillity can be attained only by self-knowledge (*ātma-gnyan*) a kind of wisdom which can be acquired by simplicity, by heedfulness, by cleansing the soul, by mastering the passions and by waiting upon aged seniors. A person thus succeeds in attaining emancipation. Prahlada, in whose mouth these words are put, had trained himself to be incapable of indulging in grief; he was without attachments, without pride, without desire and hope,

freed from all bonds and dissociated from everything. He did not see any one as his foe. Thus was he passing his time in great happiness and every man with wisdom was, in Bhīshma's time, driving towards this goal.

The *Shantiparvan*, a symbol of the learning and the intellectual achievement of the ancient Hindus, covers the whole field of human life and records discourses which contain standards of life of high value, the motive all along being spiritual.

European and American savants have tried to extract from the *Mahābhārata*, and specially from this *Parvan*, the meaning of the teachings of Bhīshma. However, they cannot follow the association of ideas, the significance of certain words and the phases of life depicted therein as we can do, the reason being obvious, *viz.*, that our ancestors have lived that life and we too are doing so. For this reason the more attempts are made to unravel the tangled threads of this great book, the more they are welcome. Our instinct will lead us right. The work of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute is a proof of this observation and an instance in point.

In spite, however, of their alien culture and unfamiliarity with the association of our ideas, some of those European savants have been able to convey the spirit of the original in their own language through translation. Sir Edwin Arnold's *Light of Asia* and *Song Celestial* naturally come to one's mind in support of this statement. To one such passage (*Adhyāya* 28, *Sloka* 36) in the *Shantiparvan* Sir Edwin Arnold is indebted for his famous lines with which I would conclude this address :—

> Like driftwood spars which meet and pass
> upon the boundless ocean plain,
> So on the sea of life, alas, man nears
> man, meets and quits again.

I only trust and hope that our meeting this evening will not be like this and that we will meet again.

K. M. JHAVERI

There is a wonderful tree, called desire, in the heart of man. It is born of the seed called error. Wrath and pride constitute its large trunk. The wish for action is the container of the water that is to nourish it. Ignorance is the root of that tree, and heedlessness is the water that gives it sustenance. Envy constitutes its leaves. The evil acts of past lives supply it with vigour. Loss of judgment and anxiety are its twigs ; grief forms its large branches ; and fear is its sprout. Thirst after diverse and agreeable objects forms the creepers that twine round it on every side. Cupidinous men, bound in chains of iron, sitting around that tree, pay their adorations to it, in expectation of obtaining its fruit. He who, subduing those chains, cutteth down that tree and seeks to cast off both sorrow and joy, succeeds in attaining to the end of both. That foolish man who nourishes this tree by indulgence in the objects of the senses is destroyed by those very objects in which he indulges after the manner of a poisonous pill destroying the patient to whom it is administered. A dexterous person, however, by the aid of Yoga, forcibly teareth up and cutteth with the sword of *samādhi*, the far-reaching root of this tree.

—*Mahābhārata, Shantiparvan.*

THE DANGERS OF THE INFINITE

[Hugh I'A. Fausset is well-known to our readers as a clear thinker, often stimulating. This thought-provoking article has its bearing on the present condition of the world.—ED.]

It is strange how often, when a theme is in one's mind, the books one reads or events in one's life seem to illustrate or reinforce it, as if one's thought drew to it by some inner compulsion the food it needed. During the last few weeks I have had occasion to read three books, A. C. Bradley's *Ideals of Religion*, Denis de Rougemont's *Passion and Society*, and Nicolas Berdyaev's *Leontiev*. And in each of these, from different angles and with varying emphasis, the problem of the right relation of the infinite to the finite has been raised. It is, I suppose, the basic problem of human life and one which the East and the West have approached from different sides, if a spatial metaphor may be applied to something which transcends them. And now we are being forced to search for the true centre in which the Infinite ceases to be an abstraction and the Finite a mere fact, but each is made real in the other. It may be, as Coventry Patmore wrote, that "nothing is so fatal to that 'real apprehension' which is the life of truth, as thinking about the 'infinite'". Yet only the thought which is infinite can reveal the truth of the finite.

Of the three books I have mentioned Bradley's alone treats this problem from a purely philosophical standpoint. But Bradley by profession was a literary critic. And when in 1907 he gave the Gifford lectures, now at last published in this book, he brought to the study of religion a mind steeped in the meaning of poetry. He did not confuse the two, but his intimate experience of the creative mystery, as it was manifested in the minute particulars of great poetry, gave him a centre from which to view both the abstract and the concrete as only modes of a reality which included them both. And it was from this centre that he measured the reality of various religions and the degree to which they were eccentric either through infinite or finite over-emphasis. In this respect his discussion of "philosophic Brahmanism" was particularly interesting. In its denial of the finite he considered that "no more genuine religion than this has existed or can exist". But he concluded that in its emphasis on the one being, free from all limitation, which abides for ever in changeless perfection, it reduced the world to a mere phantom in relation to which it was futile to act. Man was required not merely to mortify the senses and the vain possessive dreams they generate. He must renounce too, "innocent pleasures and active kindness, and his political interests, and all effort to make things better: in fact, knowledge and beauty and goodness and the ideal itself, at least as he has understood them". And of course there is truth in this. He who has died or even begun to die to the illusion of the separate self will understand and so express all such interests and activities differently. But far from ceasing to act, he will begin really to act, even in apparent inactivity, as never before.

In suggesting that the East's emphasis on the infinite emptied finite existence

of meaning or purpose Bradley was echoing a prejudice which thirty years ago was less challenged than it is to-day. Yet the problem which he thus raised is an eternally real one and few have defined the approach to a right solution of it better than he. The finite, he argued, as most of us experience it, may be an illusion. But if an illusion is not what it professes to be, neither is it nothing. And he continued,—

"You cannot get rid of the finite by flying to an infinite which leaves it existing in this curious ambiguous fashion. But if we start from the basis that somehow there is to be the infinite, and yet that the finite is not to be evaporated into nothingness, we should then perhaps have retained the positive element of the religion of the abstract infinite and have removed what rendered its acceptance impossible. .... What is wanted is a view which, instead of severing the infinite eternal reality from the finite, imperfect and temporal, would make the relation between them positive as well as negative. . . . The infinite must be the opposite or negation of the finite, and so far the theory was right. But on the other hand, it cannot be merely that; for, if it were, the finite, which certainly in some sense exists, would still remain unchanged, and therefore the infinite would not be infinite, it would be limited by this opposite outside it. What is required, then, is that the infinite should negate the finite in such a way as to include it ; and since it cannot include it as finite, or in its finite character, it must include it in a form compatible with the nature of the infinite. In that case this infinite would not be a blank in which all the distinctions of finite existence had run together and vanished, but would be the perfection of the finite which as such it denies."

This passage seems to me to state the problem and suggest the lines along which it can be solved with unusual clarity, though the solution has to be lived to be proved. The essence of it lies in the insistence upon a *relation* between the infinite and the finite. The infinite must always take precedence because it is limitless. But unrelated to a world of forms, it remains for us a void. Similarly the finite uninformed by the infinite is empty of value and meaning. Only in relation do these two voids become an organic whole, in which the finite manifests the infinite up a graduated scale from the lowest, which manifests it least and is emptiest and most limited, to the highest which is most charged with eternal significance and of which the limits are least limiting. Seen in this light the finite is no longer a wretched denial of the infinite and therefore deadly and to be escaped at all cost, but the body of the infinite and as such to be accepted with delight and awe for its infinite potentialities.

The difficulty not only of truly conceiving this relation but of truly living it is obvious. For it is as easy to accept as to deny the finite wrongly. Accepted for itself and for the selfish satisfaction we can temporarily derive from it, it is an illusion. But we are equally blinded by self-will when we deny its limits in a desire for infinite sensation. To experience the true relation we must eliminate in ourselves all selfish craving, yet we must not fall into indifference. We can agree with Mr. Aldous Huxley that "God is completely present only in the complete absence of what we call our humanity". Yet in shedding the humanity which in fact is so much less than human we must grow into the humanity which has its centre in the more than human, in the creative heart of being.

It is as dangerous, therefore, and as necessary to deny humanity as to affirm it. For while on the temporal level hu-

manity is imperfect and evil, it is potentially expressive of the highest good which we on this earth can conceive and of which we have examples in the noblest of our kind. We have, therefore, to be continually denying the impulses of our mortal humanity as a condition of expressing a divine humanity, denying desire, for example, to express devotion. Yet to accept our mortality on one level is equally essential to realizing what is eternal in us on another.

The history of man and particularly of his religions shows how extraordinarily hard it is to deny the finite or affirm the infinite without selfish perversity, or, in other words, to maintain a creative relation between them. And Denis de Rougemont in his *Passion and Society* traces with brilliant insight how a failure to do so has underlain the whole theory and practice of romantic love and also of war in Western Europe from the middle ages until to-day. A love of love as an absolute, unrelated to human conditions, is a love of death. It is the supreme egoism which desires not liberation into selfhood but annihilation into nothingness. "To love love more than the object of love", as de Rougemont puts it, "to love passion for its own sake", is to love suffering as an end instead of a means. There is a clear-sighted passion, to which the mystics testify, in which suffering is gladly accepted as a means through which the human will may become more deeply expressive of the Divine will. But for such mystics "the Dark Night" was something to be passed through. For romantic lovers, of whom Tristan and Iseult were prototypes, it was the culmination of the flame in which they sought to be devoured, the final void to which all sensation, pursued as an end, leads. Such love was, of course, the apotheosis of egotism. It scorned finite relations, save as a pretext for infinite desire. In de Rougemont's words, it "treated a fellow-creature as but an illusory excuse and occasion for taking fire". And it even devised separations, if life did not provide them, to fan the flame, that it might burn more fiercely to Death. Individuals were but so many defects of infinite non-being, and passion was intensified as an escape from, instead of a fulfilment of, human life.

Extremes of passion such as this may be rare in life, if not in literature, *but the love which is a consumption because it fails to be a communion is common enough and is at this moment raging in the world.* It is because men are foiled of communion that they seek to destroy themselves in a holocaust of mutual suicide. For the infinite in man's heart cannot be denied. And if it is not polarised in the true reciprocity of love, the creative counterpoint of one person with another, the art of neighbourliness, it will sweep through mankind with as blind a destructiveness as an unharnessed electric current. Denied organic expression in a true interplay of human life, it will gather force as a repressed longing for death which will inevitably explode. How extreme the denial has now become is shown by the kind of explosion which modern war represents. For if the Light is not married to the Darkness in a continual redemptive communion, it becomes a force of darkness, terrible in its perverted power. And man, deprived of the joy of being which can deliver him from the woe of existence, ignorant of the transcendent Day which glorifies terrestrial Night, can only become, in his longing for self-extinction, an agent of an elemental darkness.

Yet how hard it is to achieve the

creative relation even for those who are consciously on guard against escape into the infinite and who insist most strongly on polarity as the condition of true human experience, is well illustrated in the life and thought of Leontiev, the Russian writer and contemporary of Dostoievsky of whom Nicolas Berdyaev has written a penetrating study. Few can have disliked more strongly than Leontiev all notions of abstract humanity or felt more vividly the tension of opposite principles immanent in all creative forms. "Both the poetry of earthly life and the conditions of salvation hereafter", he wrote, "necessitate neither a sort of *continuous* and impossible love, nor a constant animosity, but speaking objectively, a sort of *harmonious tension of hostility and love, in face of higher ends*."

Yet near as he came to conceiving the duality which is a condition of true unity, he never, as even this sentence will suggest, really succeeded in "destroying the negation" in himself, and so in "redeeming the contraries". Hence his hatred of the human in himself and in his fellow-men, and his oscillation between an æsthetic love of the senses and a monkish denial of them. In his attachment to the finite he was as much under fate, as little a truly free spirit, as those were who abandoned themselves to the infinite. And the more one ponders the problem, the more one realises that it is only by fidelity to both, in creative love, that man's humanity may truly express the divine.

HUGH I'A. FAUSSET

A LESSON FROM A VILLAGE

It has been stressed times out of number that the nearly seven lakhs of Indian villages are the backbone of the nation, socially, economically and culturally. The communal problem bears less heavily upon the villagers than on the populations of the towns. The Editor of that valuable monthly journal *The Rural India*, in pointing out in his July issue this relative exemption of the villages from intercommunal bickerings and friction, cites the recent report in *Rashtra-Vani* of Shrimati Hemprabha Devi's visit to Nisinda village near Talora, where fifteen or sixteen Hindu families were living peacefully and amicably with about four times as many Muslim families. The joint Hindu-Muslim Panchayat was functioning efficiently and any culprit would accept unquestioningly the punishment it pronounced, irrespective of the community of whoever carried out its sentence.

Here is one instance, and we are not sure that numerous others of the kind do not exist in Rural India, which bears out our opinion that the communal canker is a malignant growth peculiar mostly to our urban life, and that where the corrupting influence of selfish politics has not spread its taint, the two communities have lived and do live still in perfect unanimity and harmony, of which happy state Nisinda described above is an example. This is one of the many things which our cities can and have yet to learn from our villages.

THE BLEND OF CULTURES IN INDIA

THE CONTRIBUTION OF OLD IRAN

[Dewan Bahadur K. S. Ramaswami Sastri writes on a theme of great importance at the present time in India.—ED.]

There is much talk to-day about the many conflicting creeds and cultures, castes and communities in India and the alleged impossibility of the emergence of an Indian nation and an Indian culture. We hear loud war-cries of "Pakistan!" In the South a political party has raised its slogan, "Dravida for Dravidians!" and urges the purgation of the Dravidian culture by removing from it the contaminations due to the Aryan culture. Some time ago an imaginative votary of Tamil derived the Tamil alphabet straight from heaven. Similar claims have been set up for the Telugu script. These war-cries are but a few of the sounds and alarums generated by the clash of intellectual arms in modern India.

My aim herein is to show that the reality in India has always been not conflict and clash of cultures but their mutual contact and collaboration. We need not go here into the question whether the Dravidians and the Aryans were both immigrants into India or had India as their original home. That matter is far from clear. Nor is it clear whether the Mohenjo-Daro and Harappa civilisation was Dravidian or Aryan or Sumerian. But what is clear is that there was a complete blend of Aryan and Dravidian cultures. The story of Sri Rama's adventures in Kishkindha is most suggestive in this respect. It is a reversal of the old clash between Aryans and Dasyus or Dasas. There is a story in Travancore that the King of Kerala fed the combatants on both sides during the Mahābhārata war. The tide of war flowed to and fro all over India. Sometimes North Indian monarchs carried their victorious arms southwards and at other times South Indian monarchs carried their banners into North India. Asokan pillars are found in South India. The Andhra Kings left their impress on North India. Every such military overflow led to a new cross-fertilisation of cultures. Even more than the military overflow, the religious overflow due to saints and sages who went all over India disputing and preaching, singing and dancing, brought about a fusion of cultures.

I wish specially to emphasise here the interrelation between Aryan and Iranian cultures, the Islam-Iranian cultural blend and the later Hindu-Muslim one. All these show that what we have to-day is a blended culture expressing itself through a Hindu, a Parsi, a Muslim or a Christian technique.

The Aryans and the Iranians were one in race and in religion. They had once a common home. Probably it was in what is now called Afghanistan and the Punjab. The people who lived there and founded a great culture were known as the Aryans. It was only later that they separated, one branch colonising the Indus River system and later overspreading the Ganges River system, and the other branch colonising Persia.

Later yet each called the other by the geographical name. The Aryans in India called the Aryans in Persia Paraseekas ; the latter called the former Hindus and their land Hapta Hindu (*Sapta Sindhu, i.e.,* the Land of the Seven Rivers), the seven rivers being the Sindhu, the Chenab (Chandra Bhāgā), the Ravi (Parushni), the Sutlej (Satadri), the Saraswati, the Ganga and the Yamuna. Or the seven rivers may also have been the Indus, the five rivers of the Punjab and the Saraswati. The Saraswati, though it was a small river and is not traceable now, was extolled as the best of Mothers (*Ambitamā*), as the best of rivers (*Naditamā*) and the best of goddesses (*Devitamā*). See *Rig Veda* II, 41, 16. Very probably the region round it was the cradle of the human race. (See *Rig Veda* II, 41, 17). The *Zend-Avesta* also refers to the most sacred river Harahvaiti (Saraswati).

The two branches of the Aryan race were great each in its own way. Professor Max Müller says in *The Science of Language* :—

" The Zoroastrians were a colony from North India. They had been together for a time with the people whose sacred songs have been preserved to us in the Veda. A schism took place and the Zoroastrians migrated westwards to Arachosia and Persia."

Professor Spiegel says :—

" The Iranians emigrated last from India, and thus carried with them the largest share of Indian characteristics."

This emigration led to the Perso-Aryans developing the antique culture in a new way which was destined to have a profound influence both on the Indo-Aryans and on the Semitic races.

Dr. Haug says :—

" The intoxicating Soma beverage was replaced by a more wholesome and invigorating drink prepared from another plant, together with the branches of the pomegranate tree, and without any process of fermentation (simply water is poured over them) ; but the name, in the Iranian form *Homa,* remained, and some of the ceremonies also."

This was because the genuine Soma which grew on the Himalayas and in the Land of the Seven Rivers was not available in Persia, and so a substitute for it was found in the mountains of Iran. Later the genuine variety of Soma became scarce in India, and so the *Aswalayana Grihya Sutra* allows the Putika or Phalguna plant to be substituted for it. Other substitutes are stated in the *Shatapatha Brāhmana.* Thus slowly the old intoxicants fell into disuse. This was not the only change. Very possibly also the dissenters among the Aryans objected to the Aryan sacrifices. Dr. Haug writes :—

" The ancestors of the Brahmans and those of the Parsees (the Iranians) lived as brother tribes peacefully together. This time was anterior to the combats of the Devas and the Asuras which are so frequently mentioned in the *Brahmanas,* the former representing the Hindus, the latter the Iranians."

The Iranian leader Zarathushtra (Zoroaster) was a religious reformer who led his men to Iran after they had been beaten in battle by the Indo-Aryans. He cried out in *Yasna* 46 :—

" To what country shall I go ? Where shall I take my refuge ? What country is sheltering the master and his companions ?...I know that I am helpless....For, I have few men. I implore Thee (Ahura Mazda) weeping, thou living God."

Zoroaster, after leading his people to Iran, consolidated his position there. He gave them very lofty ethics, and a

metaphysics of his own which differed slightly from the Indo-Aryan metaphysics. He taught the world the glory of Ahura Mazda who created the Universe and was the sole source of light and life and wisdom and goodness. In the Iranian religion there is no attempt to identify God and the Universe. Nor is there any trace of belief in Karma and Reincarnation.[1] There is a clear conception of a future life wherein there will be a distribution of rewards and punishments according to deeds done during life. The Iranian scriptures exalted morality and righteousness (*Asha*). Among the Iranians, as among the Hindus, the cow became a sacred animal. The caste system[2] prevailed in both, in one form or another.

That there was a great schism between the Aryans and the Iranians is clear also because Zoroaster treats the word "Deva" as meaning Demon. Ahura Mazda means the Wise Being. God is Light, Justice, Omnipotence. *Ahura* corresponds to the Sanskrit word *Asura*. The word *Asura* is used in some portions of the *Rig Veda* in respect of gods and especially of Varuna, and in other portions as meaning demons. In *Rig Veda*, X. 124, it is used in both senses. In the *Atharva Veda* it means only demons. Dr. MacDonnell is, however, wrong in saying in his book on Sanskrit Literature that *Sura* was coined from *Asura*. *Sura* means the shining being. The syllable *rā* probably comes from the root *Raj* (to shine), or the root *Rā* (to receive) or the root *Rā* (to give). Thus *Sura* and *Deva* mean the same thing.

It is thus very likely that the Iranians were the dissenters, because while the Vedic *Devas* become Demons in Zoroastrianism, there is no contemptuous condemnation of or even any reference to Mazda in the *Vedas*. Very possibly Mazda is only the Vedic God *Mitra* in another form. *Amesha Spentas*, who are said to be Ahura Mazda's children, correspond to the Adityas. The foremost of them was named Vohu Manah (the Good Mind). Vohu Manah corresponds to the Holy Spirit and is the revealer of Ahura Mazda's secrets to men. Next to him are *Asha* (Righteousness), *Khshetra* (Power), *Aramaiti* (the goddess of the earth and of wisdom and piety), *Haurvatat* (felicity) and *Ameratat* (immortality). The *Rig Veda* (VII. 36, 87) refers to *Ritamahim aramatim jnam Devim Ritajnām*. In Zoroastrianism *Sraosha* is the god of obedience. *Airama Ishyo* means the desired friend.

Zoroaster's ethics are lofty and noble. The concept of *Asha* is the counterpart of the Vedic concept of *Rita*. He sharply contrasts Right and Wrong. Emerson says well that the universe when looked at from the point of view of the intellect becomes a Unity, and when looked at from the point of view of conscience becomes a Duality. After all, the contrast of *Ahura Mazda* and *Angramanyu* is nothing more than a counterpart of the conflict between Nirguna Brahman and the Gunas. Zoroastrianism stresses the eternity and victory of Ahura Mazda. Its gospel is an optimistic gospel. Man must be ethical to win God's favour. He must have *Humata, Hukhta* and *Huvarshta*, *i.e.*, Good Thoughts, Good Words and

[1] The doctrine of Karma is implicit in Zoroastrianism. The late Sir Jivanji J. Modi has written an excellent essay on the subject, which is included in his volume entitled *Oriental Conference Papers*.—ED.

[2] See *The Dinkard*, Vol. I, pp. 36-7.—ED.

Good Deeds. Zoroaster preferred the good life in the world to mere asceticism. Agriculture is enjoined in his scriptures. Among social virtues he specially commended Truthfulness, Faithfulness and Charity. The Parsis are even to-day the most charitably disposed people in the world.

Thus Zoroastrianism developed a high ethical ideal and a clear-cut Dualism in metaphysics. The former had a great effect on Hinduism just as did later the protestant movement of Buddhism, born in India itself. But in India the wonderful monism of the Upanishads was a rare and radiant flowering and could not but be regarded as the greatest forward step in metaphysics. As a result of the schism which led to the Perso-Aryans going away from their parental home, they missed the perfume and the sweetness of such a splendid blossoming. They missed also the wonderful synthesis which was attained in the *Brahma Sutras* of Vyasa and in the *Bhagavad Gita,* which form the very summit of religious thought. But the sublimity of their ethics, their clear vision of the antagonism between Right and Wrong and their unwavering monotheism had a wonderful effect on the neighbouring Semitic religions and brought to Hinduism a re-emphasis on the ethical life as an indispensable part of the spiritual life.

Zoroastrianism firmly believes in immortality and in heaven. The conception of heaven is refined as the House of Song and Praise, the Home of Saints. Zoroaster understood and realised "man's destiny on earth and beyond in the terms of a divine family". The Souls cross over the *Chinvat* Bridge and pass into heaven. *Chinvat* means the separator (of the good from the bad). Zoroaster himself is said to keep the Bridge, to guide the Souls over it and to plead for them before God. Zoroastrianism has the two concepts of Individual Judgment and the Last Judgment. The bones of the corpse were ordered to be preserved, as there was faith in a resurrection of the body. *Aramaiti* would give pure and sinless bodies in heaven and the good souls were destined to live there in perfect happiness. There was also a belief in the Return of Zoroaster and in the renovation and regeneration of Creation.

Hinduism, Zoroastrianism, Buddhism and Jainism are Aryan religions. Judaism, Christianity and Islam are Semitic religions. These seven religions rule the world to-day. Of the former group Zoroastrianism profoundly influenced Judaism, and through it, Christianity and Islam. It influenced and perfected the concepts of monotheism and immortality and heaven and hell in those faiths. Mr. Samuel Johnson says well in his book on *Persia* :—

"Although a flood of physical force swept its special name and organization out of being, its soul passed into Mohammedanism, Judaism and Christianity to mould these new accessions to the same essential purpose."

Strangely enough, Islam swept Zoroastrianism out of Persia and the unconverted and unconquered remnants of the Iranians came back to the bosom of the ancient but Eternal Mother-India. Two causes contributed to this result. One was that the Islamic Brotherhood was not weakened by the Hindu or Iranian caste system or the Christian class system. Further, Islam created and maintained a military or a semi-military culture whereas the Hindu and Zoroastrian polities had become

overcivilised, luxurious, pacific and disorganised.

But this Islamic conquest of Persian culture led to a modification of the spirit of Islam. Professor Darmesteter says :—

"Islam indeed as practised in Persia is no Islam at all. It is the ancient religion of Persia clothed in Mussulman formulas."

Sufism is the blend of Zoroastrianism and Islam and was profoundly influenced by Hindu Vedantism. Mr. M. C. Parekh says :—

"The origin of this new spiritual movement, in all probability, is to be found in India."

Sufism had its finest efflorescence in Persia and in India and shows the influence exercised by both on Islam. It is, in short, the subtle and sweet ripening due to the grafting of Islamic on Indian thought, and *vice versa*. Mr. M. C. Parekh says with true discernment :—

"The fact that Indian Moslems, according to this author, have taken so kindly to Sufism, clearly shows that the Moslems of India, a very large majority of whom come from the Hindu race, are still true to their racial genius and spiritual heritage."

Babar, Akbar and especially Prince Dara were profoundly influenced by it.

One of the finest episodes of Indian history is that relating to the Parsee Pilgrim Fathers. The unconverted and unconquered Zoroastrians fled to India. India was really a country of repatriation and not a country of exile to them. The Parsee Pilgrim Fathers came to Hindustan at the beginning of the eighth century of the Christian era and since then have flourished as a community in India. Their worship of the Sun and the Fire made them thoroughly acceptable and accepted in India. Akbar treated them with respect and kindness and helped in the spread of their culture in his court. He wanted a religious and cultural blend of Hinduism, Zoroastrianism and Islam.

It is not possible to refer in detail here to the cultural and religious blends of Hinduism and Islam in India. I have tried to do that work in a series of articles on "The Evolution of Mysticism in India", which is to appear in these pages. Not only in music, painting and architecture was there a harmonious blending of the highest ideals of the Islamic and Hindu cultures, not only were the Taj and the love of perfumes, *Attar*, the product of such a fusion, but also in the field of religion and of philosophy Indian Sufism brought special graces of its own and the great Saints Chaitanya and Kabir and Nanak showed the common basic ideas of the two religions. Islam felt the impact of Hindu mysticism and idealism and Hinduism felt the impact of Islamic democracy.

After the advent of British rule, Christianity made considerable advance in India. In Malabar and elsewhere it had progressed even earlier. The Christian ideals of service and social love and practical philanthropy have deeply influenced both Hinduism and Islam, as well as Indian Zoroastrianism. In its turn Christianity has felt the fine touch of Persian and Indian Sufism and of Hindu Vedantism.

As a result of these currents and cross-currents, India has stamped herself indelibly on all the cultures—whether home-born and home-bred or immigrant and India-bred. All the religions and cultures in India show

certain features indicating their Indianness. We find in them all a quivering sense of the sacredness of life, a concept of universality in diversity, a high ethic, a preference of defensiveness to aggression, a fine mystical feeling and a deep sense of the divine. The blend of cultures in India is real. Though the social and religious formulæ and techniques of the various communities may differ and must be preserved in the interests of diversity of charm and charm of diversity, they will in future be concordant and not discordant, and we can witness hereafter the forward flow of the Indian Culture through the life of the Indian Nation.

K. S. RAMASWAMI SASTRI

ASOKA'S EMISSARIES

Most of Mrs. Rhys Davids' article on "Asoka, Heir of 'The Way'", which appears in the First Issue for 1940 of *Indian Art and Letters*, is devoted to showing how that great Indian ruler of the third century B.C. carried on the spirit of the teaching of Gautama the Buddha, to whom he owned allegiance. For example, though the expression "the Way" does not appear in any of Asoka's rock and pillar Edicts, he refers repeatedly to growth and to becoming and to action in accordance with *Dhamma*. She mentions also the compound *bhava-sudhi*, enjoining man to cultivate self-restraint and to foster the divine growth in himself, which we might equate with the Buddha's "Cease to do evil; do good."

Some of her most interesting comments, however, are in reference to the claim against which she has protested before, *i.e.*, that Asoka's emissaries to other countries were missionaries in the sense of propagandists of Buddhist theology. She seems to challenge even the idea that Asoka sent missionaries of any kind outside of India.

> The Edicts say only that he sent men of a sort, called incidentally *dūte* (a term never, I believe, used for *religious* missioners or messengers, "as far as" (*i.e.*, to the confines of) certain Western dominions.

It was indeed no theological dogmas that Asoka promulgated but the moral verities which underlie all creeds and which the Buddha had so greatly stressed. Rock Edict XIII, quoted by Prof. Radhakumud Mookerji in his valuable article on "The Proponent of Universal Religion" (THE ARYAN PATH, January 1935) seems, however, to leave no doubt that Asoka's emissaries did travel not only to but also in other Indian kingdoms and carried their message to the territories of "five Greek kings", identified as the contemporary rulers of Syria, Egypt, Macedonia, Cyrene and Epirus. In all of these he claimed to have won a "moral conquest" (*Dharma- Vijaya*) so that people were following his moral injunctions.

It would, of course be preposterous to see in this effort at moral education an attempt at proselytism. Mrs. Rhys Davids indeed points out that in Girnar XII Asoka specifically "deprecates 'commending one's own sect and blaming another's...save lightly'". Missionary activity in the objectionable and essentially self-righteous modern sense would have been unthinkable to the wise king who recognized the unity of all religions in their central truths and who wrote :—

> Whosoever extols his own sect and condemns the sects of others wholly from a blind devotion to his own sect, *i.e.*, from the thought, "How I may glorify (*dīpayāma*) my own sect",—one acting thus injures all the more the interests of his own sect. Therefore, it is very desirable that the followers of different sects should be brought together in concord (*samavāya*) that they might know of the doctrines held by others.

LIGHT IN ISLAMIC MYSTICISM

III.—IN IBN AL-'ARABI AND HIS CONTEMPORARIES

[This is the third of this instructive series of articles by **Dr. Margaret Smith** on the conception of Light in Ṣūfism.—ED.]

The conception of Light set forth by al-Ghazālī was developed by a great theosophist of Andalusia, Muḥyī al-Dīn Ibn al-'Arabī, the "Grand Master" of Ṣūfism. He was born at Murcia in A.D. 1165 and after studying in Spain travelled to the East, visiting Egypt, Syria, Baghdad and Asia Minor. He settled finally in Damascus, where he died in A.D. 1240. He was a profound and original thinker, making use of many systems of thought, including Hellenism and the Epistles of the *Ikhwān al-Ṣafā'* and, not least, the teaching of his immediate predecessor, al-Ghazālī. Ibn al-'Arabī was an esoteric in his mystical faith, for he felt the inner light at work within himself, and in that radiance he saw unveiled the mysteries of the Unseen.

He was the great exponent of a system of pantheistic monism, which he sets forth chiefly in his "Meccan Revelations" (*al-Futūḥāt al-Makiyya*) and in "The Bezels of Divine Wisdom" (*Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam*) and also in a shorter work the *Kitāb al-Ajwiba* (Book of Answers) : he also wrote a collection of poems, "The Interpretation of Divine Love" (*Tarjumān al-Ashwāq*), which is based on the same doctrine.

Like al-Ghazālī before him, he regards Pure Being, that is, God, as Pure Light and therefore, like al-Ghazālī, he considers Light to be synonymous with existence and darkness synonymous with non-existence : light is the source of all good and darkness the basis of all evil. The Divine Essence, Uncreated Light, is all that exists.

"He is the very existence of the First and the very existence of the Last and the very existence of the Outward and the very existence of the Inward. So that there is no first nor last nor outward nor inward, except Him."

But while the Divine Essence, the one True Light, is all that exists, Light, by its very nature, must manifest itself ; the One can be regarded as a pure Essence, without attributes, beyond relation and therefore beyond knowledge, or as an Essence endowed with attributes, God in action, the Light manifested in the universe. While the Essence is One, the attributes are many, and when the Light is manifested, it becomes Oneness in multiplicity. What seem to us realities are but the shadows due to His light or lesser lights reflected by the Light of lights. "The universe", writes Ibn al-'Arabī, "in relation to God, is like the shadow to the substance", and again, "The place where the shadow of God appears is called the universe, and from this shadow His infinity may be realised." What is known is the shadow, but just as from the shadow we do not know the extent of the substance or form, so we may say that the shadow cast by the Light of God is known, that we see His manifestation of Himself in the universe, but that He Whose manifestation it is is unknown. Shadows have no sub-

stance in themselves because of their lack of light, but this shadow is His, from Him it appears, and unto Him it returns. In so far as He is manifest in many forms, He is called the Universe, which is therefore God, but in so far as His Being is One, the Universe is called His shadow.

Again, using another simile, Ibn al-'Arabī describes all created things as the reflection of the knowledge of God seen as in a mirror : " creation " therefore is not a bringing into existence out of non-existence, for all things have existed aforetime as ideas in the Divine Mind ; the universe is simply the outward aspect of that which in its inner aspect is God. But as the object reflected in the mirror gives nothing of itself to the mirror, so the emanation of the Divine Light, giving being to what is in the world, means no division of His Essence : His action is like that of the sun, shedding its light upon that which would otherwise be dark ; He was, and is, for ever One.[1]

The soul represents the human personality, and by knowledge of its own nature the soul can raise itself to Universal Soul, that is, it can return to God from Whom it came. As the Prophet said : " He who knows himself, knows his Lord." Man consists of a body, which is dark and gross, and of a spirit, which is simple and luminous, possessed of the power of apprehension, and this is really an emanation from the Light of God, which takes the form of the " rational Soul ". The means of apprehension, in Ibn al-'Arabī's view, is always Light, without which nothing can apprehend or be apprehended by the mind or the senses or the imagination. " When you apprehend what is audible ", he writes, " you call the light hearing, and when you apprehend what is visible, you call the light seeing." Everyone who apprehends and everything apprehended must have some relationship with the apprehending Light, which is God.[2] Human souls vary in their degree of enlightenment, for the revelation of the Light is in proportion to the extent to which the heart is prepared to receive it. Just as the glass of a lamp when clear enables the light within to shine forth and the mirror, when polished, reflects the light more perfectly, so also in the heart that is pure the inner light is seen more clearly.

The highest aim of man is to realise and reveal his Divine nature and so to become consciously one with God. If a man cleanses his heart, says Ibn al-'Arabī, then the Light of God shines forth more clearly and continuously within him. Of the Path which must be followed by those who seek this purification, Ibn al-' Arabī writes in his *Interpretation of Mystical Love*, where he describes the pilgrims on the way to God, travelling through the night of their bodily existence which shrouds the spiritual light within. He speaks of the war between this world of matter and cohesion and the Divine Ideas which the world loves and desires because its existence is derived from their regard upon it. It is this natural world which hinders the hearts of gnostics from apprehending the Divine Ideas. The pilgrims, he states, stop to rest at dawn, which is the boundary between this phenomenal world and the spiritual world where all is irradiated by the Divine Light. There they put on the garments of sanctity,

[1] *Fuṣūṣ*, pp. 177, 181 ff., 184, 56, 57. *Futūḥāt* III, pp. 365, 578.
[2] *Futūḥāt*, III, p. 365.

for the radiance of gnosis can be gained only through Faith and Contemplation, aided by Love. Love means the subordination and the sacrifice of the self in order that the lover may partake of the attributes of the Beloved and be irradiated by the Light which is His Essence. "It is the principle in love that thou shouldst be the very Essence of thy Beloved and shouldst pass away from thyself into Him." In such a lover the inner light seeks to convey to the members the Divine realities. "In this station a man sees by God, hears by God, speaks by God, and moves by God."[1]

This is the Unitive life, but Ibn al-'Arabī insists that the mystic has not *become* one with God, he has only realised that he is, and always has been, one with Him. "Thou seest all thine actions to be His actions, and all His attributes to be thine attributes and thine outward to be His outward and thine inward to be His inward." He who knows himself sees his whole existence to be the existence of God and sees no change take place in his own essence and attributes, for God is Light and he himself is light. "When thou knowest thyself, thine egoism is taken away and thou knowest that thou art not other than God."[2]

Ibn al-'Arabī was a universalist, for he held that the Divine Light was manifested in all faiths: the four inspired Scriptures, the *Qur'ān*, the Psalms, the Pentateuch and the Gospel, he considered to correspond to the fourfold Light of the Niche, the Lamp, the Glass and the Oil.[3] Since all things are a manifestation of the Light, God may be worshipped in any form and, in his view, no positive religion could be regarded as containing more than a part of the truth. So he advises men not to attach themselves exclusively to any particular creed, refusing to believe in any other, for as Light is limitless in its manifestation so God, the Omnipresent, is not limited by any single creed, for He Himself says: "Wheresoever ye turn, there is the Face of God."[4] But the highest form of worship is that dominated by Love, which knows no intolerance and shows charity to all men, for in all it sees the light of God shining within.

Light, therefore, to Ibn al-'Arabī, is the very Essence of God, and since God is the only Reality and there is nothing else in existence, Light is, to him, identical with Real Being.

Contemporary with Ibn al-'Arabī and sharing his views of the Unity of Being, and Light as the principle of Being, was Ibn al-Fāriḍ (A.D. 1182-1235), the greatest of the Arab mystic poets, an Egyptian who was born and died in Cairo. He has left a Diwān of poems. The longest of his odes is a hymn of Divine Love called "The Mystic's Progress" (*Naẓm al-Sulūk*), generally known as the *Tā'iyyat al-kubrā*. He regarded himself as receiving continuous illumination, and his poems as the result of Divine inspiration.

Like Ibn al-'Arabī, he held that the universe was the result of—and sustained by—a continuous series of illuminations, emanating from the Uncreated Light of God. He, too, finds God in all things. They, in their manifold forms, are like the shadows thrown by a showman on a screen, but the reality behind

[1] *Tarjumān al-Ashwāq*, XXIII. i, XLVI. 1, XXVII. 1. Cf. also *Fuṣūṣ*, p. 186.
[2] *Ajwiba*, pp. 814, 816.
[3] *Sūra*, XXIV. 35. Cf. Articles I and II of this series.
[4] *Sūra*, II. 109.

them is the hand and mind that moves[1] them. He writes :—

Regard now, what is this that lingers not
Before thine eye and in a moment fades.
All thou beholdest is the act of One
In solitude, but closely veiled is He.
Let Him but lift the screen, no doubt remains
The forms are vanished, He alone is all :
And thou, illumined, knowest that by His light
Thou findest His actions, in the senses' night.[2]

The human soul, he teaches, was pre-existent in the eternal knowledge of God —and to Ibn al-Fāriḍ the Divine knowledge is the Divine Light—before it entered the body ; and in so far as man is related to the Divine he is Reality itself, but in so far as he belongs to Nature he is unreal. While fettered by the body, the soul is always seeking to ascend again to God, and the Way means dying to self in the power of a disinterested love for God, a love which opens the heart of the mystic to receive the Divine Light, whereby the inner spark is kindled and blazes up. He writes of the enlightened spirit :—

Now is the pitchy gloom for us made dazzling,
Since Thou Thy Splendour gav'st me for my guidance,
And when Thou from mine eye in outward seeing
Art gone, I cast it inward, there to find Thee—
That men do borrow radiance from mine outward
'Tis not strange, when mine inward is Thy dwelling.[3]

To such a lover, who is no longer veiled by his own individuality, the vision of Unclouded Light is revealed, and he knows himself to be one with that Light. In his contemplation, says Ibn al-Fāriḍ, the lover sees himself to be possessed of those Divine Attributes which had veiled him from himself in the days of his blindness and he sees now that he is one with Him Whom he loved. "I found that my own existence had vanished and I realised within my inmost self, that He and I were One. My attributes are His and His outward aspect is mine. I had been ever One with Him as He had been One with me."

Like Ibn al-'Arabī, Ibn al-Fāriḍ could find something Divine in all forms of religion, for in every form of worship, he maintains, it is the One God Who is worshipped, whether the worshipper be Muslim, Christian, Jew, Zoroastrian or idolater. Men are seeking after God even when they go astray. "They who fell in love with the sun did not lose their way, for its radiance is from the glory of My Unclouded Light." So, too, the Magians were seeking only God in their worship : they had seen the radiance of His Light and thought it to be fire, and so they were diverted by the rays from the Essential Light itself.

So Ibn al-Fāriḍ, too, is a pantheistic monist, holding that all are one with that Pure Spirit Which encompasses all things with the glory of its Light.

MARGARET SMITH

[1] A simile used also by al-Ghazālī.
[2] *Tā'iyyat al-kubrā*, v. 679 ff. (translated by R. A. Nicholson).
[3] *Diwān*, p. 230 ff. (translated by R. A. Nicholson).

THE INFLUENCE OF TOUCH

[R. B. Pinglay contributes an interesting article on some facts of daily occurrence whose import is very little understood.—ED.]

In his article in the August 1938 issue of THE ARYAN PATH Mr. Jack Common has written interestingly of *The Unrealised Sense : Touch and Hands*. His treatment of the subject is purely subjective and invites a fuller elucidation from the objective aspect.

The term, "sense of touch", is taken here to mean not only the physical sense employed in touching a mossy stone or milky-smooth marble but also more subtle and spiritual overtones. This sense of touch is so refined in some persons that they can distinguish their own clothes from those of others by mere touch though theirs are of the same material and texture. The revulsion felt by Ramakrishna when any one touched him with a coin unseen by him is decidedly an example of a sense of touch of an high order. The question, "What organ do you close supposing you want to dwell upon the feel of a mossy stone or to distinguish between the dense milky smoothness of marble and the brittle catching smoothness of glass?" arises because there are no strictly localized organs for the sense of touch as there are for seeing and hearing. It is said that many a highly spiritual person while at his devotions keeps dwelling in his mind upon the sacred touch of his *Guru's* feet. Great souls have felt the embracing touch of their Lord while in deep meditation. The loving mother in deep reverie during her child's absence feels rather than imagines the child's caressing touch. Is it not the experience of one and all to feel in dreams the loving touch of one's dear ones or to shrink with a shudder from a detestable object?

The sense of touch is therefore as much realised and felt as any superior sense. Its influence is something unique and mysterious, something which cannot be explained rationally. People have felt it, have suffered from or enjoyed its magic influence and either welcome or shun such an influence.

Sometimes people run away from the influence of certain persons because they fear their baleful touch. What is termed *Hastha-rās* or *Hastha-visēsh* (influence of the hand) is commonly believed in, although the origin and the root of its existence is a mystery. Every one at some stage in his life is certain that there is some philosophical or theosophical explanation of that influence that will relieve him of his mental anxiety in the face of the unknown.

The influence of touch is very strikingly felt in the medical profession. People say that a particular physician or surgeon is good and can relieve suffering. They flock to him from afar not because he is more highly qualified and capable than other physicians but because his patients have invariably benefited from his treatment and from contact with him. He administers the same drugs as other doctors, but the results are quite different and surprisingly beneficial. There is obviously some quality in him which helps in the relief of suffering. It is not the essence of a remedy nor a priceless ingredient, but the quality of the physician himself, the

mystic or spiritual influence of the person who dispenses the remedy, which is important. It is never the scientific mind that relieves suffering but the pure heart and the beneficent hand. The very touch of the physician relieves the patient of his distress ! Thus it is said that a physician has *Amruta-hastha* or *Dagda-hastha,* according as his treatment has beneficial or evil effects on his patients. In ancient days the touch of the King was believed to heal the scrofula, which was known as the " King's-Evil ". The power of healing by mere touch is latent in many, but this faculty is attained only by means of a good life. This innate power is further developed by continuance in the same unsullied and unwavering goodness.

The mystic influence of the benedictory touch of the spiritual teacher or *Guru* has been experienced by the fortunate few among disciples and devotees. The *Guru* places his hand on the disciple's head to confer a general blessing or, in specially deserving cases, to aid spiritual advancement ; the latter is known as *Hastha-dīksha.* Thus Kavyakanta Ganapati Sastri, a disciple of Sri Ramana Maharshi, experienced difficulty while engaged in *tapas* and wished for the spiritual guidance of Sri Maharshi. Immediately he saw the *Guru* enter, he at once prostrated himself before him. As he rose Sri Maharshi placed his Divine hand on the disciple's head, whereupon the latter felt something spiritual pass through him. Another high function of touch is to release the soul from bondage. Sri Maharshi sat by the side of his dying mother, who was gasping for breath and placed his right hand over her heart and his left over her head until " the life in her body became extinct and the soul was absorbed into the Spirit, into the peace that passeth all understanding ".

In everyday life the influence of the hand and touch are regarded as highly important. Dealers solicit their first business from the good hand for they are sure that at the touch of the good hand their goods will soon be sold. Similarly the first customer is never allowed to touch goods without making a purchase for fear that the first touch might be inauspicious and prevent the sale of all the goods. This first purchase is commonly known in South India as *Boṇi* and is rigidly observed by all tradesmen and dealers. Then trees planted by certain hands are very fruitful while in other cases they are quite barren. The good hand makes the seeds sprout, the green leaves shoot, the beautiful flowers blossom and the luscious fruits ripen. The touch of certain other hands makes the things of nature perish. The building whose foundation-stone is laid by some beneficent hand prospers greatly, and the house constructed by a good contractor who is also a good man brings happiness to the owner. Is it by chance that certain other houses stand desolate and uninhabited for years ?

The sense of touch is so delicate and so individual that it is not communicable to others. One who possesses a refined sense of touch cannot teach another to appreciate the overtones of touch. It is equally impossible to transmit the all-important sense of touch in the case of music, painting or sculpture. In truth, no Beethoven or Mozart, no Pyarasahib or Thyagaraja can teach another his skill. At best one can direct another's steps to the right path to gain knowledge. Dexterity of touch on the strings or with the brush is only attainable by practice up to a certain point ; more

depends upon each individual's inborn skill.

The civilised man, as Mr. Common points out, can live in a chaos of noise with his ears shut to all but what he wills to hear or can walk in a crowded street with his vision closed against the shapes and colours till he sees the one he seeks. But he can also, while wedging his way through a crowd of persons, some brushing against him gently, others pushing him rudely, be quite oblivious of the pleasant or unpleasant touch of others, until he touches the object of his affection or devotion whom he seeks. There is thus the same "preliminary shutting out" or delimitation of the field of sensation in touch as in the case of the other senses.

The hand, which is the chief seat of the sense of touch, is "a symbol of the directive principle of activity either outgoing (right) or incoming (left)". The expression "touch of hands" means something good and noble and "to keep touch" has come to mean to keep faith or fidelity. Truly has Shakespeare spoken of friends as "of noble touch". Persons of like touch are most likely to become close friends.

The man who is undergoing spiritual training, however, has to live, so to say, in his own atmosphere and must avoid the touch of every other human being. Why is this so? I wrote in the August 1938 number of THE ARYAN PATH on "The Power of the Eye". An individual's magnetism, while passing most forcefully from his eyes, is projected also, according to the ancient Indian teaching, from his thumbs and the palms of his hands. The Western practice of indiscriminate hand-shaking, while an expression, when sincere, of good will and of cordiality, has, therefore, its drawbacks. The Oriental, both in India and in China, is wiser in having a salutation which does not involve such an exchange of often antipathetic magnetic emanations. The wise hand is "slow to world greetings".

But there are occasions when the clasp of a friend's hand puts new life into us and gives us courage to face and to overcome all of our difficulties. Should not that give the necessary impetus to make our own touch such that it may be of like help in another's hour of need? A good touch and a good hand are as welcome as a good heart, of which they are, indeed, the expression and the proof.

R. B. PINGLAY

THE THRONE

The sound of the Wind of the World,
Worn round by the Sun,
Immortal, compels all the Winds
To return one by one,
All the Winds to their centres
Foregather and speak yet again
From the Throne.

BARNETT D. CONLAN

PREPARATION FOR CITIZENSHIP

II.—THE DUTY OF THE CITIZEN TO THE STATE

[This is the stenographic report of the second of a series of three Mysore University Extension Lectures by Sophia Wadia, the first of which appeared last month. Professor B. M. Srikantia presided on this occasion.—ED.]

Friends,

Yesterday we spoke of Democracy as Sva-Raj, the Rule of the Spirit, Impersonal and Universal, whose Light dwells in the heart of each and should shine for all. We saw how the great problem of Democracy was Right Education; to-day and to-morrow we are going to study together that problem from two points of view: education first from the view-point of the State and then from that of the citizen. First, what does or should the State expect from the citizen? Secondly, what does or should the citizen expect from the State?

Common to both parts of this dual examination is an important factor, one much talked about but not much used. Each one of us has a solemn duty to his own "mind-Soul", the duty of reasoning for himself, of gaining perception and conviction in all matters in life. The herd-instinct, colouring our mental outlook, is responsible for a great deal of unhappiness and even of vice. And more—the very Soul of education is the power to apply to all our tasks the light of knowledge received by the mind—not only received, but also garnered and assimilated by the mind. The function of Education is to bring to us perception of the mind, conviction of the heart—the Manas and the Buddhi of our ancient psychology. Before words are uttered and deeds are done the Light of Atman passing through our lamp of Buddhi-Manas must be sought and utilized. This is the central, the foundational method of the right system of education. This principle is so generally ignored in modern educational systems that more than one vice springs from its neglect: people in the mass follow, like so many circus animals, their trainer; and when some revolt against authority and tradition they go to the other extreme—they throw away everything, and in the name of liberty embrace license! Not that they give up the herd-instinct—they only go from one herd to another, like a conservative becoming a radical, a Fascist becoming a Bolshevik. Do not overlook this fact: conservatives make a herd, yes, but so do Bolsheviks make another herd. What we have to learn is so to broaden our perceptions, so to deepen our insight that we shall belong to the small company of those who are possessors of the Light of the Spirit. Every boy, every girl, at school and at college should be taught to use this method; at present that is not possible because most teachers and professors are not themselves possessors and radiators of the Light of Atman. And the reform, therefore, should begin in the adult community. The modern tendency to judge a man's success by his capacity to elbow others out and to push himself to the front is dangerous to the State and debasing to the individual. "To get on in life" so that we may come to the top, even at the cost of

others, is a degrading ambition. As we saw yesterday, competition begets rivalry with others and war abroad but it begets within oneself petty meanness, subtle conceit, corroding envy. Every programme of social uplift or of political betterment has to be tested by pure reason. This is the backbone of human evolution which may be rightly defined as Self-education. In educating the Self we grow and make true progress.

So, let us educate ourselves.

But what is self-education? Define it by the aid of the philosophy of the Spirit as expounded in the *Upanishads*. Self-education is the education of the human self by the Light of the Universal Self. But the Self of the Universe, the Great Atman, is not something remote and far away to be prayed to and invoked with petitions. The Universal Self is Humanity's Self. The Supreme Brahman is omnipresent in Humanity; Prajapati, the Lord of Praja, the Race, is active in that Race; recall the striking phrases of the thirteenth *Gita* where we read that the Supreme Spirit

"has hands and feet in all directions; eyes, heads, mouths and ears in every direction."

This is the ancient teaching of the *Yajur-Veda*. Listen :—

"The Purusha has one thousand heads, one thousand eyes, one thousand feet; It pervades the whole earth, and yet it dwells in space of ten digits."

The Universal Spirit speaks through all human mouths, observes through all human eyes, works through all human hands. The hands of each of us are the hands of Brahman; the mouth of each of us is the mouth of the Supreme Purusha. This is the basis of Self-education. The human self, that is, your self and mine, has to educate itself for the uplift and the service of the whole. In a hundred places in our ancient philosophy this concept of the human Soul serving the cause of the Universal Spirit, the individual serving Humanity, is stressed. The very doctrine of Avataras implies this. Why does Krishna incarnate *yuge-yuge*, from age to age? "For the establishment of Dharma, I am born from age to age." There is no grander or nobler or more inspiring ideal than the one we come across in the traditional life of the Buddha. It is said that the Tathagata having secured the supreme Light of Nirvana renounced it, so that remaining with humanity, He might help and serve it.

All this may sound remote and metaphysical, even unrelated to the subject of our study. But is it? Without this spiritual foundation self-education and self-made men spell arrogance, strength, individualism run mad. No, let us repeat—self-education is the education of the human self so that it can serve in and through life the Self of Humanity.

In the light of this definition not only the young at school and at college, but also the adults in the struggles of life have a prize to work for, a goal to reach, an objective to attain. What are we to attain through self-education? The capacity to serve: capacity unfolded implies growth, evolution; service rendered implies that that evolution is taking place on the spiritual plane, that is, for the good of all.

Here let us note the similarity between the State and the school. The State *is* the school for the adult; schools, colleges, universities, are but devices through which the young are educated; but so also the professions are educational devices—the clerk, the lawyer, the engineer, are also learning while labour-

ing in the State. What the student is to the school, that the citizen is to the State. This principle is not universally recognised ; but, unless it is, harmony will not subsist between any State and its citizens. At the present hour, the citizen is exploited by the State—in small or in great measure ; and Nature being compensatory, in the sense in which Emerson uses the word compensation, the citizen tries to cheat the State, whether in paying his income-tax or in some other way ! *Shila,* harmony, between citizen and State will not emerge till two factors are fully recognized in self-education.

First, education must enable a person to earn his livelihood, to keep his body and Soul together and more, to build his home and to maintain it. But this vital and important function at present is separated from the duties of citizenship and of service of the State. Second, serving the State through our profession, our very means of livelihood, is an ideal not strenuously worked for to-day. In this concept are the roots of real spiritual socialism : a man must continue to educate himself, must grow and evolve every year of his life, and the avenue for that education, the channel for that growth, is his own profession, his own means of livelihood. The Great Buddha gives Right Livelihood—*Sammājivo*—as the fifth step of His Noble Eightfold Path. The very soul of Right Livelihood is the use of the means of livelihood for the good of others, for the good of all. At present the lawyer or the engineer, the doctor or the architect, unless employed and paid by the Government lives for himself primarily and most of the time ; and even when employed by the Government he is not always a servant of his co-citizens, but often a master and a rude master at that ; he serves in the first place his superior officer, with an eye to occupying the seat of that superior ! Only indirectly does he serve the State.

Now, we who are adults have to educate ourselves in this ideal—of serving our fellow-men through our daily life, at home, at office, in the law-court if we happen to be lawyers, in the paddy-field if we happen to be farmers. While the adults of this generation have to take themselves in hand, the case is not very different for the youth at school and at college. It is not recognized that self-education begins very early in life ; the pupil educates himself even at school—at present non-self-consciously, and the pupil has to be taught to do so consciously and deliberately. But let us confine ourselves to the adult citizen.

This self-education depends almost entirely on self-discipline. Right livelihood which the Great Buddha advocated depends on right discipline of ourselves. If the greatest problem of Democracy is Education, as we saw yesterday, so the great problem of self-education is the mode of self-discipline. Self-education and self-discipline alone bring forth Sva-Raj, real Self-government. Right Livelihood is the apex of a Divine Triangle ; from that point proceed two lines, one is self-education, the other is self-discipline and these two are connected at the base by the third line—Service rendered to the State and to Humanity. Unless in earning our livelihood we manifest the capacity of educating ourselves by correct discipline so that our profession, high or low, is of some help and inspiration to our fellow-men, that livelihood is not Right Livelihood, *Sammājivo.* There is self-government

in Britain and in France, and even in Russia and in Italy, but what kind of self-government? Real Sva-Raj has for its synonym Dharma-Raj, and it is through the fulfilment of Dharma which is Duty, Law and Order, that in our individual lives or in the State Self-Government is realized.

Without discipline no State can exist : the condition of a State, whether it is spiritual or material, liberty-upholding or tyranny-imposing, is shown through the laws of that State and the way in which those laws are administered. Bad laws and tyrannical governments cannot be overthrown—this is the lesson of history—by bad conduct and bloody revolutions. This idea is implicit in the doctrine of Avataras : Krishna, the Righteous, by his Righteousness overthrows unrighteousness-*adharma*. Knowledge dispels ignorance and virtue vice. In considering, therefore, the duty of the citizen to the State the first factor to recognize is that the citizen has a duty, a *personal* duty, to the State : he has not merely the duty of paying his taxes and of observing the laws imposed, but also he has a voluntary contribution to make through Right Livelihood whatever the mode of that Livelihood may be.

Turn now to what self-discipline implies in the scheme of self-education.

The most vital question which is on the lips of everybody, even when the idea of self-education has not occurred to him, is : "What is this force of evil, of passion and lust, of anger and wrath, of greed and covetousness, of egotism and pride, and all the other uglinesses with which the human being is cursed?" The good and the evil within each one of us forms the subject-matter of discipline. Self-discipline has two aspects —one related to the subduing and the transmuting of the evil enveloping us ; the second related to the unfolding of the good qualities inherent in our spiritual nature. This dual task consists not in acquiring knowledge, but in applying knowledge, in practising that which we know by our mind to be true and good and beautiful. Knowledge is important, highly important, but we must make sure first that that which we call knowledge is not false knowledge, and next, that the knowledge is not applied in a wrong direction. The factor which will strike you immediately when you endeavour to educate yourself by disciplining yourself in the two-fold manner described is that knowledge is related to virtue and to morals. Why is it, friends, that with so much knowledge abroad there is increasing vice, enhancing competition, ever expanding misery? Test any line of knowledge by the light of your perception of virtue ; avoid, nay, not only avoid but reject the mere economic and pragmatic point of view, and insist on looking at events and ideas, at facts and speculations from the point of view of the Soul, the Immortal Soul which you are, and you will agree that a great divergence exists between the point of view of the ancient Sages, the Seers of the *Vedas*, the Singers of the *Upanishads*, and that of the modern man of science—who, if he is shallow, knows everything, and if he is profound admits in all humility that his knowledge is bounded by limiting horizons !

You will need knowledge in disciplining yourself ; let that knowledge be such as will bring you virtue—the feeling of divine altruism, of enlightened generosity. The discipline with its two departments we must examine. It is a vast

subject on which psychologists hold divided and conflicting opinions. Some of us who have studied comparatively ancient Asiatic Psychology and modern Physio-psychology and psycho-analysis are strongly and definitely in favour of the ancient school. Very briefly let us see what kind of discipline the ancient texts such as the *Gita* and the *Upanishads* recommend.

Each human being is a mixture of low and high, of evil and good, of ignoble and noble. The low, the evil, the ignoble pertain to an aspect of ourselves that we ourselves dislike and more—sometimes positively despise. Who is there among us who has not experienced the pang of remorse when we have indulged in that which we loosely call wrong? The first point in self-discipline is to recognize this duality between—shall we call it the despised lower nature and the other, the despiser? The high, the good and the noble pertain to the Soul aspect of man; our higher aspect, that is, the Soul, is the beholder, the spectator, the perceiver—the Upadrashtra of the thirteenth *Gita* who observes the weaknesses and the meannesses of the lower.

Study this lower nature first from the point of view of personal happiness and personal advancement in life. Vice befogs perception as alcohol does. Even a little alcohol affects our sight because the very retina is impressed and further —mental perception is affected. A little alcohol every day undermines mental clarity; so it is with moral weakness. Viciousness grows out of small moral lapses. A fiend in human form is as much a product of evolution as anything else in Nature. This is not generally understood : a little alcoholic indulgence is not looked upon as dangerous or even as wrong; so with small moral lapses. Wrath is feared, but a little irritability is looked upon as natural; gross sensuality is condemned, but small lapses are winked at; a black lie is censured, but a white or even a grey lie is often considered legitimate; and so on. These little defects, these small moral lapses, are grave detriments in their cumulative effects.

The *Gita* brings out very forcefully how the vicious tendencies blind us to truth, to nobility, to righteousness. In the third discourse Krishna speaks of "the constant enemy of the wise"—*nitya vairi*; and what does it do, this *vairi*? It sways the senses, *indriyas*, the mind, Manas, even Buddhi, the heart-insight, and more—note, please—it bewilders and deludes the *Dehi*, the Lord in the body. This principle of desires and passions, kāma, produces that kind of difference which is dangerous to the whole social order. Yesterday it was said that the saint and the sinner were not of equal value to the State, while the Brahmana, the Kshatriya, the Vaishya and the Shudra, the lawyer and the doctor and the engineer, were of equal value though different in their qualities and actions. Differences of Guna and of Karma are opportunities and avenues of the soul; but when these are not used as opportunities and avenues for soul-growth they become dangerous elements, not only in our personal life, but also in the life of the State. There is no difference in value to his own Soul-growth and to the State between an efficient lawyer and an efficient engineer—efficiency including, please remember, the moral factor—but between an honest and sincere lawyer and a dishonest, lying lawyer who exploits his clients there *is* a differ-

ence which the State cannot and should not permit. In disciplining ourselves this aspect of our place, our value as a citizen of the State, must be fully considered.

The second aspect of Self-discipline, that aspect which pertains to our higher Soul-nature, is more positively and more constructively related to our duty, our *dharma,* as a citizen. Our personal character, our personal capacity, that is, our moral insight and our mental output, are assets to the State and to the country to which we belong. In the *Manusmṛiti* as in the *Mahābhārata, āchāra,* good conduct, is a concomitant of *dharma.* "*Āchāra lakshano dharma*", says the *Mahābhārata* : "The mark of dharma is āchāra." Again, it is said that "the Shruti and the Smṛiti declare āchāra to be the highest dharma"; this is in the *Manusmṛiti.* Nowadays āchāra, goodness, and politics are two compartments, instead of only one.

Our time is nearly up and we must close. The duty of the citizen to the State for the building up of a Spiritual Democracy is so to discipline himself in the earning of his livelihood that through it he is able to make the gift of his mental capacity, his moral worth, to the State which offers him the training-ground for the evolution of his own Soul. Not in some special heroic way has the State to be served, but in the sphere of our own life, whatever it be; living in the attitude of consecration we render service and thus we grow. In at least two *Upanishads,* in the *Chāndogya* and in the *Taittiriya,* the man who attains perfection is declared also to have attained Sva-Raj; the very term is used. Just as Soul-enlightenment is related to sense-control, so also is Spiritual Democracy related to vice-control, to the expression of the great virtues. Those citizens who attain the rank of leaders have a special obligation to the State and to the people. The honesty demanded of a government official to-day is not sufficient. The leader of citizens and the maker of laws should not only display the honesty recognized in diplomacy and in state-craft; he must possess mental integrity and an honest heart. In the India of to-morrow, even of to-day, we must demand not only good character as they do in other lands, but something more: we must demand if not attainment of spiritual status at least a sustained endeavour to live the Higher Life, in which the senses are controlled, the mind is kept pure, egotism and selfishness are subdued and the sense of justice is expressed. The home of the leader and of the legislator must be a Centre of Light. The leader's capacity to think clearly and to labour assiduously in matters of State is intimately related to his life at home. His home is the moral and spiritual gymnasium where he must exercise his moral and spiritual muscles so that he may bring to his work, to his service of the State, moral and spiritual energy.

What is the moral and spiritual exercise to be undertaken at home—not only by the husband, but also by the wife; not only by the parents, but also by the children; not only by the employers, but also by the servants? In a single verse the Buddha has shown it—the mode of real prayer, which is seeking the Light of the Spirit. In the *Dhammapada* it is described :—

"Self is the Lord of self; what higher Lord could there be? When a man subdues well his self, he will have found a Lord very difficult to find."

This is the same prescription as is found in the *Upanishads* and in the opening verses of the sixth *Gita*. Only the Light of the Spirit can bring real Sva-Raj to the State and to the country to which we belong.

In building his home every citizen should invoke the Light of the Self, which is beyond and superior to the light of the moon and the sun and the stars, but which is nearer to the heart than the stars, the sun and the moon. Do not expect the Light to radiate from the Halls of Legislative Assemblies if the Light of the Spirit does not shine forth from the Government House and from the homes of Ministers.

In the *Manusmṛiti* the Grihastha-ashrama is called Shreshta, the highest of the four ashramas, and the duty of every State to-day is to enable every citizen to restore to the Order of the Householder its supreme position. In the India of to-day let us be Builders of Homes, pious homes, prosperous homes, philanthropic homes; for thus only India, as a real Spiritual State, will arise to spread her Ancient Knowledge abroad, to shed her Light of the Spirit over the whole world, and thus will fulfil her mission of service to Humanity.

SOPHIA WADIA

HIGHER THAN LIBERATION

Writing in the May *Adelphi* on "The Hope of Liberation" Mr. R. H. Ward differentiates between the effort towards liberation which is self-escape and which permits as short cuts all the pleasures of life—which may imprison man further instead of releasing him—and the liberation which understands the necessity for discipline and has self-transcendence for its goal. The former he blames as "the author of a world-condition such as we are at present experiencing". The latter he praises as "positive liberation", bringing man to more abundant life, bringing all his potentialities into play, making him more than himself.

But to seek for oneself even the latter liberation, the Mukti or Nirvana of the Indian ascetic, is, from the point of view of altruism and of human brotherhood, but a higher escapism, spiritual selfishness if you will, but selfishness all the same.

Compassion speaks and saith: "Can there be bliss when all that lives must suffer? Shalt thou be saved and hear the whole world cry?"

Buddhism points to an even nobler goal, that of the Bodhisattva, who, having attained the spiritual stature of a Nirvanee, deliberately renounces the bliss of Nirvana, to remain with sinning, suffering Humanity, to guide its stumbling progress towards the Light.

NEW BOOKS AND OLD

IDEAS FROM VEDANTA *

One who had the pleasure of knowing Mr. B. K. Mallik at Oxford in 1920 but had since lost touch with him—which happens to be the case of the present reviewer—will greet the publication of his *The Real and the Negative* with pleasurable expectations. The charm of manner and brilliance of conversation which distinguished the young Indian philosopher of those days conveyed also a sense of purpose. Here, one felt, was a thinker whose self-chosen destiny was to contribute to the mutual understanding of East and West—specifically of India and England—somewhere near to the very roots of ideation, upon the plane of metaphysic proper. His new book—539 pages of elaborate cerebration—is best considered in the light of a possible fulfilment of this vocation, for such, if anything, will be the value of his performance.

The beginning of the work suggests a very sound method upon Mr. Mallik's part. He does not, as some have tried to do, expound Indian philosophy in English with occasional illustration from Western thinkers. Instead, he sets up as an individual thinker, with a quite new and purely individual perception of the Truth to tell us—which is what most Western metaphysicians have done. Then he proceeds to criticize the findings of Western philosophers from Descartes onwards and with particular attention to that thinker's discovery that there is an affirmation of belief or certainty even in the very process of *doubting*—which is the kind of thing usually done by a Western philosopher ambitious to make a contribution to metaphysics.

But in thus putting on the mantle of a European pandit—correct to every detail of the cut and the trimmings—Mr. Mallik remains what he is. And in consequence we have a very interesting critique of a certain aspect of European philosophy, namely, its treatment of the concept of the Negative; but the ideas which emerge in this way and are, so to speak, insinuated into the mind of the reader, are ideas from the immemorial Vedanta. This is a method of philosophic cross-fertilization which is interesting and might, if many practised it, produce deep effects.

Actually Mr. Mallik—who has not for nothing spent so much of his life at Oxford—is at his best in the first part of the book, where he is defining his own position as a purely logical one. In the latter half he essays the less congenial task of outlining something of a *Weltanschauung* or *Loka-Samgraha*, from the position defined; and in doing so betrays his weakness, which is a lack of factual or tactual contact with the world he lives in. One even fears that his long absence from India has not been well compensated by long residences in an England so much limited to Oxford, the home of English philosophy and other lost causes.

Even in the logical section, this weakness appears. There is too much lofty generalization as to what all the philosophers, or large factions of them are supposed to have taught or assumed, insufficiently substantiated by concrete and individual instances. This not only fails, at times, to carry conviction: it puts needless strain on the reader, who feels that the stratosphere has become too rarefied to breathe. And when it comes to the effect of world thought upon world-history, this defect is a still more dangerous disability, for one is made to doubt if Mr. Mallik knows the world he is dealing with. For example, he has a long dissertation upon the historic

* *The Real and the Negative.* By B. K. MALLIK. (George Allen and Unwin, Ltd., London. 21s.)

effects of the two conceptions of God, which he calls the Incarnationist and the Absorptionist,—which perhaps correspond broadly to those held in Christendom and in Asia, though that is not the contrast he is explicitly presenting. He asserts that the Incarnationists, by producing systems supposed to derive from Divine origin, become too absolute in their claims, and are prone to proselytisation and war. But this generalisation, which is plausible enough, is not balanced by its contrary, which has as much history to confirm it, that the Absorptionist attitude, with its mystical belief in man's power to raise himself to Godhood, is found closely related to secular ambition no less dangerous, ambition to produce or to become the Divine leader, the temporal god on earth, whose worship exacts the most sanguinary rites.

Later on Mr. Mallik tries to draw comfort from the "fact"—as he thinks—that modern man has lost his beliefs in an omnipotent God and in an incarnate Evil, and no longer believes in sacrifice or suffering. He is outgrowing all these beliefs as "blunders", says Mr. Mallik, but is finding instead a new sense of God and of religion in the very absoluteness of his scepticism, which is leading him to a new sense of omnipotence (his own?) through discipline and technique. This is to enter a realm of such vast speculations that it is hard to say anything very convincing about it; but Mr. Mallik seems rather blind to things actually happening around us, such as the idealization of mass sacrifice, suffering and death in the causes of human demi-gods, and the unprecedented exhibitions of faith in evil which men are now giving. As for the growing realization in many intelligent minds that our boasted "technique" is all based upon the compulsion of matter, and not on the co-operation with life, which might be a sounder basis for hope, he seems never to have heard of it. Frankly, when he peers into the future Mr. Mallik's vision is a little like the optimism of an old-fashioned Liberal, which, with an intellect like his, is odd.

The style of the book is very fluent, rising at times to eloquence; so that it is strange the book should be so difficult as it is to read. The truth is that the author has written far too much, and is quite unaware how often he is repeating himself in different words. As an old college friend of his, a Chinese student named Fu, used to say, "Every man has his drawbacks: Mallik's is talking." And so it proves in this, his *magnum opus*; there is far too much talk for the amount of thought, though the latter is considerable and the best of it is substantial.

PHILIP MAIRET

DEMOCRACY IN THE FUTURE*

The main theme of Professor Dewey's close-packed and deeply interesting book is the urgent necessity of re-thinking democracy. The classical formulations of democratic principles—American and French—belong to the pre-industrial era, when the main effort of democratic legislation was to secure the maximum liberty for the individual in a system of social relations which were largely personal. This liberty was secured by placing strong checks on the activity of the central government, and establishing the constitutional rights of the citizen. This negative or purely political conception of democracy is inadequate to the problems of an industrial society, in which social relations are depersonalized and the individual person is not an effective agent as compared with the organized groups—the business corporations, the trade unions and the like. The very meaning of private property is radically changed, so that the social effects of the conception of the sanctity of private property, which were

* *Freedom and Culture.* By JOHN DEWEY. (George Allen and Unwin, Ltd., London. 7*s.* 6*d.*)

beneficent when agriculture was the main occupation, become quite different when it is applied to the huge business corporation : for in this new form private property involves a vast concentration of economic power in socially irresponsible hands. Again, the once liberating principle of the freedom of the press becomes questionable when only newspapers with a huge circulation and a huge advertisement revenue can flourish.

> The very agencies that a century and a half ago were looked upon as those which were sure to advance the cause of democratic freedom are those which now make it possible to create pseudo-public opinion and to undermine democracy from within.

These agencies have moreover developed in ways undreamed of. The radio is an instrument of prodigious and sinister power for influencing the mind and behaviour of the masses.

The conditions created by these new social techniques are such that democratic freedom can no longer be regarded as something which citizens of the democracies already possess, and have only to defend. The truth is rather that democratic freedom has now to be deliberately willed and created. There is no simple means to this end. Society is now so complex that the effects of any legislative act of the central government are largely incalculable. The only way to deal adequately with such a situation is to adopt the truly scientific procedure of framing hypotheses and testing them. But to commend this procedure to the democratic masses is no easy task. They expect panaceas, and demagogues will always be ready to offer one. Moreover, as we have seen, big financial interests, which are not in the least concerned to establish democratic freedom, are in control of the instruments of information and propaganda. Thirdly, education is not really correlated to the democratic end : people are not educated into the capacity of forming an independent judgment ; they are not prepared for the responsibility of democracy.

The dangers which now confront democracy are thus immense. Professor Dewey would probably say that European democracy has already succumbed to them ; not only positively in the totalitarian countries, but negatively in the countries which have had an ill-considered war-collectivism hurriedly forced upon them by the effort to repel totalitarian aggression. It is but natural that Professor Dewey should primarily be concerned with the future of democracy in America : for there it still has the opportunity for peaceful development. Here is his weighty conclusion :—

> Democratic ends demand democratic methods for their realization. Authoritarian methods now offer themselves to us in new guises. ...Our first defence is to realize that democracy can be served only by the slow day-by-day adoption and contagious diffusion in every phase of our common life of methods that are identical with the ends to be reached, and that recourse to monistic, wholesale, absolutist procedures is a betrayal of human freedom no matter in what guise it presents itself. An American democracy can serve the world only as it demonstrates in the conduct of its own life the efficacy of plural, partial and experimental methods in securing and maintaining an ever-increasing release of the powers of human nature, in the service of a freedom that is co-operative and a co-operation which is voluntary.

Every sentence in that passage deserves to be pondered. To-day an Englishman meditates it with sadness, for he cannot but reflect that it is unlikely that his country will enjoy, for many years to come, the security and the freedom which would enable it to advance, with America, along the path of experimental democracy.

JOHN MIDDLETON MURRY

Knife and Life in India. By T. HOWARD SOMERVELL. (Hodder and Stoughton Ltd., London. 10*s.* 6*d.*)

Dr. T. Howard Somervell is an eminent surgeon of South India. He is well known also as a climber of Mount Everest. He is in charge of the "largest medical mission in the world", which centres round the mission hospital in Neyyoor, Travancore. He draws his patients from hundreds of miles around, chiefly for the excellent surgical work done by himself and by his small band of workers.

The story of the growth and the development of the mission reads like a novel. He has been connected with it for seventeen years and in this book gives of his varied and rich experience of his patients and their life. His dynamic personality is stamped on every page and one cannot but appreciate the frank and fearless way in which he speaks his mind.

The only flaw in him is that he is a missionary, *i.e.*, a propagandist who seeks to sell his wares by decrying those of others. The desire to show the excellence of Christianity leads unfortunately to the rather uncharitable method of looking always for defects in the other man's religion and morals. As the aim is to attack and to conquer, the interest is centred only on the vulnerable points in non-Christian life, and therefore the picture given of that life is altogether out of focus. No civilised person wishes to prop up magic, witchcraft, devil-worship and superstition. Combine with such a distorted approach the self-complacency of a young aggressive civilisation which cannot divest itself of its own standards of thought and conduct, and you can account for the reactions to Indian life contained in this book.

This is all the greater pity, for the type of Westerner who is apt to read *Knife and Life in India* already suffers too much from this very disease. So long as the "holier-than-thou" attitude exists, represented by the effort to save and to civilise the "heathen in his blindness", and is fostered by books of this kind, there can be no possibility of fellowship or of brotherhood between peoples, for fellowship implies comradeship and understanding, neither of which is possible where one party looks down on the other.

Is it not to such superior self-complacency that we must attribute the contempt with which he describes indigenous methods of healing? And yet he himself admits that the people have undying faith in them and will come to him only as a last resort. This is not mere conservatism on their part. In spite of all that he has to say against these methods he will find, if only he takes pains to study them, that there is a wealth of science behind them, the practices of quacks and magic men of course excepted. One knows of case after case where Western doctors had failed and where indigenous methods have effected a cure.

Illustrations can be cited from the book to show how the desire to pick holes leads the author also to a false view of Hinduism. Such, for instance, is his belief that Hinduism teaches selfishness and is opposed to brotherhood. On the contrary, the one sin most decried in Hinduism is egoism (*ahamkara*) which must be got rid of to attain salvation, and necessarily connected with the condemnation of egoism is the belief in an ultimate unity which regards all man-made distinctions such as caste, over which our author stumbles, as illusory and non-existent.

Full of life and interest as the book is and correct as the facts may be which it cites, it is a proof, if proof were needed, that the whole missionary attitude is vicious. True knowledge and brotherhood can come only when people live their own religion and leave others to live theirs to the best of their ability.

BHARATAN KUMARAPPA

The Deeper Causes of the War and Its Issues. By GILBERT MURRAY, VISCOUNT SAMUEL, W. R. MATTHEWS, ERNEST BARKER, SIR WILLIAM BEVERIDGE and Others. (George Allen and Unwin, Ltd., London. 5*s*.)

It is like travelling into another climate to turn from the grim tabling of the effects of war to this calm and civilised discussion of its causes. The papers here collected are addresses given under the auspices of the British Institute of Philosophy. They have the unity, therefore, of minds cultivated under the influence of similar meditations. All are agreed that war is an evil. One might expect such a conclusion from a gathering of philosophers were it not that a contemporary meeting of the heirs of German philosophy would begin with the opposite assumption. War is an evil, they say, because it may destroy civilisation. But this civilisation has both bred and survived many wars—what cause is there for its sudden frailty? One says sin; two, a destructive herd-instinct; three, the influence of bad Nazi philosophy; four, disbelief in a religious absolute turning to a temporal one, Leader and State instead of God and Church; five, decay in the Christian soul of Western civilisation; six, narrow nationalism misusing an international science; seven, the lack of a basis for order in Europe; and eight, the existence of national armaments. In that crude summary, you may see how each out of his special knowledge illustrates a facet of one essential fact: the peoples of the West have lost their religion; with it, that general pattern of living which asserts the kinship of all men; so they cling to the lesser community of their nation, and endeavour to impose its order upon their neighbours. Their unsuccess is war: the effort of those who have no order in themselves to impose order on others.

The diagnosis is sound. Beyond that vision becomes myopic. The book ends with Sir William Beveridge's plan for a Federal Europe which would include Germany as well as the democracies but excludes Russia, Italy and the Balkan states. Now that is certainly an issue of this war. Germany would federate Europe under her dominion; the Allies must attempt a linking of the European states which is stronger and more effective than anything the Versailles treaty envisaged. Politicians may think such a settlement a great achievement; a philosopher might permit himself a less parochial view. Federated Europe does not spell peace; it does not remove the symptoms diagnosed; it does not reassert the general community of man; it does not resurrect the soul of Christendom; it does not abandon great armaments. "First, the federation should be prepared to use its armed forces in support of international justice throughout the world." To impose order, in short, itself lacking faith and decayed in soul.

Now what we must ask from the British Institute of Philosophy is a companion volume dealing with the causes of peace. The assumption that peace comes whenever fighting happens to stop is an unworthy one. Peace has to be made, and people are always making it. When they go to war it is not for any other reason than this, that temporarily they are not in themselves creating peace. It is an aptitude that has to be rediscovered now, as it has been many times before. Man is a prince of peace, and philosophers should never tire of publishing the peace in man. That is their glory.

JACK COMMON

Chakravalam. By NALAPAT NARAYANA MENON. Translated by N. BALAMANI AMMA, with a Foreword by SOPHIA WADIA. (International Book House, Bombay. Re. 1/12)

Shrimati Balamani Amma has here attempted a free English rendering of one of her uncle's inspiring poems in Malayalam. Translating poetry is always a hazardous business, but Shrimati Balamani Amma's version sounds at once adequate and exquisite. In *Chakravalam* the poet does indeed glance from Heaven to Earth, from Earth to Heaven.

A grain of sand, a blade of grass, dancing fireflies and crawling serpents, tigers and owls, the silent shadow, a chance bump against a wall—these set him thinking, and soon his thoughts embrace the universe. The fetters of convention break asunder and reveal the intimate relation between God, Nature and Man. The earth-crust that cribs and confines human vision falls off, and the poet,

> ...with an eye made quiet by the power
> Of harmony, and the deep power of joy,

sees into "the life of things". He realizes that seeming variety, conflict and disorder are but the isolated notes of a moving symphony that is God's own writ. He feels coursing through his veins the one impulse that ever ebbs and flows throughout the Infinite; his synoptic vision sees the identity between giant star and star dust, between the ages immemorial and each fugitive moment of time; he hears all Creation hymning a Song of Honour, and he joins the choral song. His doubts are resolved and henceforth Eternity is manifest even in the dull routine of the day.

The word "chakravalam" means "horizon". Man's horizon is the measure of his own aspirations :—

> Everything is small to those eyes, who have condensed infinity into the orbit of their vision.

But the more we see, the more there is still to see; the horizon allures us from afar, and yet, as we approach it, it recedes far into the distance.

> The void seems as though inciting our curiosity thus :
> "Look! thou shalt see!"

As with eagerness intense we observe multifoliate Nature, the myriad forms of creation, "the mixed pigments of day and night" and the patterns of perverse-seeming destinies, the enkindled Light fuses them all into refulgent harmony and the puzzling dichotomies disperse, leaving only the "face of eternity looming like a white lotus". And look! we've come through!

Chakravalam belongs to that class of creative literature which unites poetical and mystical ecstasy into a single flame. Words are symbols and sentences are often prayer-like in their incantatory magic. Shrimati Balamani Amma deserves the gratitude of all students of mystical poetry for making available to them in English this trembling recordation of a sensitive soul's reaffirmations of faith.

K. R. SRINIVASA IYENGAR

Reflections on Indian Travels. By CHANDRA CHAKRABERTY. (Vijaya Krishna Brothers, Calcutta. Re. 1/8)

This is a strange book whose title is as misleading as it is catching, for it is not, strictly speaking, a book on Indian travel, though travel may have caused the author to write it. It reads rather like an intimate diary of one interested chiefly in history and in the present pathological conditions in various sections of the country and the treatment which is being attempted. It is a jumble of facts and speculations with scant arrangement and inadequate editing. The author might well divide his book into two distinct volumes, the one comprising his historical data and the other his *materia medica*, his comments on diseases, their symptoms, treatment and history.

To the real India as the spiritual home of the human race and even to India's terrestrial beauties, our author is as blind as he is awake to the ugly side of life which is to be found anywhere by those who seek it. There are undoubtedly collected here many statistical facts and figures of interest to the historian and perhaps to the medical missionary, but there is nothing to inspire or to elevate the mind of the reader, no poetic beauty, nothing of philosophical interest, nothing, in short, which in the opinion of this reviewer warrants its publication as a book on Indian travel. Though this volume is likely to find but few readers, those who do even scan its pages dealing with illness will have an erroneous idea of the True India. Perhaps, though, the book has an object and bears a message which has been utterly lost on the reviewer.

D. C. T.

This Spiritualism. By C. J. SEYMOUR. (Longmans, Green and Co., Ltd., London. 5*s.*)

This unpretentious volume is valuable as showing the reaction of an open-minded sceptic to a first-hand experience of spiritualistic phenomena. Mr. Seymour has given his readers the benefit of notes made by him on visits to mediums and "circles" of varied qualities. With the Great Reaper wielding his scythe to some effect over an ever-growing area of war and destruction, we may expect an intensified revival of interest in the subject of survival after death. For those who are unaware of the vast literature of spiritualism, Mr. Seymour's work affords a suitable introduction to the subject. He declares "spiritualism to be true", and suggests that disturbing and doubtful phenomena may be explained by the fact that the *whole* of the intelligence of the communicating "dead" person may not be "available at the relevant time". He supports the belief in Reincarnation, basing his judgement upon the psychological distinction between individuality and personality :—

Personality, which is the sum total of our earth manifestations, our reaction to terrestrial environment, *persists* only. That is, it has duration, and at some stage must cease to function as personality—though it is not lost or wasted : it and its experiences are absorbed into the individuality or soul.

It is to be hoped that further research will induce Mr. Seymour and others like him to question the validity of the theory of communication by "dead" persons, and to check the results of modern investigation by a study of psychical phenomena in the light of Eastern (and especially Indian) theories of the nature and operation of human consciousness.

B. P. HOWELL

The Message of Islam. By A. YUSUF ALI. (Wisdom of the East Series, John Murray, London. 3*s.* 6*d.*)

Mr. Yusuf Ali has been prominently associated with movements for the achievement of spiritual unity, notably with the World Congress of Faiths in London. In this attractively produced little book he makes his own characteristic contribution to that great end. His own contribution, we say ; yet not his own, for he is the interpreter of an ancient Message, a mouthpiece through whom the essential teachings of the Qur-ān are here presented to English readers in clear and flowing prose.

In his brief Foreword, the author describes himself as "a humble Muslim and a devout believer in the unity of God". Humble he is, for the learning which has gone to the making of this résumé is concealed, evident only to the discerning eye. Only the scholar, as deeply versed in Islamic learning as Mr. Ali himself, could judge of the faithfulness of his rendering of the definitive text. But even the novice will see that it is the *spirit* rather than the *letter* of this teaching that is given us here. To say this is, however, no derogation of a masterly achievement which is the more praiseworthy since its purpose is to declare "with unfaltering voice the Unity of God, the Brotherhood of Man".

Manifestly this teaching bears the marks of its environment, more familiar to Christians than to Hindus. Yet modernist Christians may pardonably wonder why Adam and Noah are accorded so noble an apostolate ; whether Jesus was (as the Qur-ān says) "of virgin birth" ; why, in short, myths and legends are accepted as historical events. The Qur-ān, like the Bible, needs its critical commentators. But there remains the grand appeal of the Brotherhood of Truth in all ages revealed in illuminating apothegms like these :—

Great Teachers are sent to all nations, to warn against Evil and guide to the Right.

Teach the Truth, but fret not about men rejecting it.

Nothing can lessen each soul's personal responsibility for its own deeds.

Man can ascend to the presence of God, but by gradual ways and in process of Time.

What can we do to make God's Light shine forth through the Darkness around us? We must first let it shine in our own true selves.

Mr. Ali's English is simple, crisp, rhythmical, concise.

LESLIE J. BELTON

I Believe : The Personal Philosophies of Twenty-three Eminent Men and Women of Our Time. (George Allen and Unwin, Ltd., London. 15*s.*)

A man's beliefs take on a sharpened significance in such a time as the present when anywhere over no small part of the world the next day, the next hour even, may well see him stripped, if he is not already so, of everything but those beliefs. For they must be strong to give him, then, strength to stand alone in them. Yet if he cannot he is no more a man, he is nothing. " If the sun and moon should doubt, they'd immediately go out " is an authentic human if a dubious solar and lunar truth.

The test of these crucial days is a severe one to apply to these twenty-three " personal philosophies " of distinguished contemporary thinkers, scientists, sociologists and writers. It is nevertheless the only one that ever really matters, even though easier times may disguise that fact. Yet, when it is applied, the result is disconcerting. The main question which emerges is not what elements of belief these men and women hold in common, but rather whether they, and that portion of mankind whom they may be taken to represent, have not lost the very power of positive belief. E. M. Forster, in one of the best of these essays, is very frank about this. " I do not believe in belief." So, less strikingly, is H. J. Laski. " I can see in few individual lives the effect of belief." Most of the contributors would agree with H. W. Van Loon that " none of the so-called revealed religions will ever give me the slightest satisfaction ", and with Thomas Mann that " for me and my kind the religious is lodged in the human ". Lin Yutang gives it perhaps its most decisive expression in asserting that

> the only kind of religious belief left for the modern man is a kind of mysticism in the broadest sense of the word, such as preached by Lao-tse. Broadly speaking, it is a kind of reverence and respect for the moral order of the universe, philosophic resignation to the moral order, and the effort to live our life in harmony with this moral order.

(The only really striking exception to this common outlook is Jacques Maritain, Catholic and Thomist.)

The key-note of the volume is accordingly found to be a kind of tolerant humanism, shared by all the contributors whether they set such faith as they can muster in science, in Marxism, in humanity, in the unknown and the unknowable, or in a more colourful nature-mysticism. Practically all write with a direct sincerity conducive to simplicity. Pearl Buck, Forster, Lin Yutang, Emil Ludwig and Thomas Mann make possibly the most direct appeal ; Havelock Ellis, Julian Huxley, Maritain, Jules Romains and H. G. Wells all achieve distinction ; only a few of the others descend to levels of political triviality.

Yet the impression of negation, of insipidity, remains, and without solving the problem whether the fault be in the " belief " or in the " believer ". " What of the fire and faith within you, men who march away ? " It is the *fire* that is somehow lacking. These men and women stand, one feels, still at the negative pole of the great realisation that no one statement or attitude can ever compass the whole truth and nothing but the truth. What is desperately needed to-day is, however, its positive and therefore passionate embodiment in a tolerant but true and truly vital belief.

GEOFFREY WEST

Sacred and Secular. By ERIC GILL. (J. M. Dent and Sons Ltd., London. 7*s.* 6*d.*)

Toward the end of his book, originally a series of lectures, Mr. Gill observes that " it seems necessary to say that nothing I have written here is in contradiction of what I have been saying for the last twenty-five years." This, unfortunately, is true, and the reader is likely to know in advance what Mr. Gill is going to say. It is also a pity that he should say the same things over and over again.

Most of us know that he is a devout Catholic, an excellent stone-cutter (he might not care to be called an artist), and a man who throughout his life has girded against capitalism and industrialisation, and has pined for the Middle Ages, the dominance of society by the Church, and the making of goods by hand. "Let the workers take over the industrial order of society", he cries, "let us see where that leads us. For God's sake do not let us attempt to sickly over an enfranchised industrialism with the pale cast of bourgeois art-nonsense." "Only one thing matters, Christ gave himself; that is the fact of Christianity, the keynote,—sacrifice, not worldly riches; sacrifice, not worldly prestige, success or complacence." And again, "Christians have acquiesced in the dispossession of the workers; they have acquiesced in the inhumanity of an impersonal financial-control of human work." He also exclaims, "Forget all about artists being special men with highly superior visions—seeing more than other men see—abnormal men, seers and prophets. The best works in the world were done before there were any art schools or life classes." We are not told which works Mr. Gill considers to be the best in the world, but we do know that there were art schools in very ancient Egypt.

Many readers will sympathise with the author's wish to see life become simpler, men more self-supporting and art almost anonymous; with his claim that capitalism has reduced the workman to the level of "a tooth in a wheel"; and with his desire to see work become wholesome and joyous: but have we not been hearing this gospel for at least seventy years and does it differ at all from the proclamations of William Morris? Mass-production, moreover, may have many deplorable results, and yet whatsoever changes may follow the present upheaval of half the world, we are likely to see a steady increase in the mass-production method rather than a return to the small shop and the bench of the craftsman. It is a method which has the irresistible assets of convenience and speed. A simple pastoral society would admirably suit the present reviewer; he even wishes that he could chat with two or three dryads while tending his flock; but he has no belief in the power or the will of men to go back from complexity to simplicity. Mr. Gill seems, in consequence, to be preaching an attractive but impracticable gospel.

The book is enlivened by several satirical and amusing drawings, the work of Mr. Denis Tegetmeier.

CLIFFORD BAX

Urdu Prose under the Influence of Sir Sayyid. By S. M. ABDULLAH SHAH, M.A., D.LITT., with a Foreword by Dr. MUHAMMAD IQBAL, M.A., PH.D. (Sh. Muhammad Ashraf, Kashmiri Bazar, Lahore. Rs. 3/8)

Sir Sayyid Ahamad Khan, the founder of the Aligarh Movement, not only ushered into the isolationist Muslim society of the nineteenth century a new era of reconciliation with the progressive forces of the West but also brought about a renaissance in current thought and literature. Urdu, an offspring of Indo-Muslim thought in India, still received inspiration from the classical models of Persian literature which was, both in form and in spirit, the prototype of Urdu literature. Its writers, Muslims in particular, were still averse to the modernising influences of English literature. But the gradual assimilation of new ideas began shortly after the Mutiny of 1857, when Sir Sayyid, the daring apostle of reconciliation between the East and the West, and his ardent followers, Muḥsan-ul-Mulk, Nazīr Ahamad, Shiblī Nu'mānī, Hālī, and others, brought about a most astounding change in the outlook of Urdu writers. This forms the theme of this brilliant work by Dr. Sayyid Abdullah Shah of the Oriental College, Lahore.

The era of Sir Sayyid was a period of conflict between science and religion and as English literature stirred the imagination of Muslim intellectuals of India, Urdu soon became a vehicle of powerful

creative thought. Urdu prose, previously confined to artificial word-jugglery with thought subservient to an extremely florid and ornate style—an imitation of fast-decaying Persian—received a new orientation, both in thought and in expression. The "Naturalists" of the school of Sir Sayyid aimed at the revival of Islamic sciences on the basis of critical and rational judgment. In sharp contrast to the established views, a standard of new scholastic theology based on reason was evolved by Sir Sayyid, "the tallest tree in the garden of Islam", and by Shiblī Nu'mānī, whose *al-Kalām* will always stand out as a starting point in that direction. The latter was an erudite scholar, a poet, historian, critic and theologian who contributed more than anybody else to these ideals for the "reconstruction of religious thought of Islam in the light of new philosophy and on new lines suited to the taste of the moderns", though, contradictory as this may appear, he is truthfully described as having "strengthened the forces of conservatism and of orthodoxy".

But, apart from the evolution of the new religious thought in Islam which found its expression in Urdu prose, another great contribution was made by Hālī and by Shiblī. This was the introduction of a standard of literary criticism. The former's *Yādgār-i-Ghālib* and *Mukaddima* and the latter's *Sh'ir-ul-'Ajam* established for Urdu writers new principles of literary criticism, mainly borrowed from English works on the subject. Hence we find that histories and biographies like *Hayāt-i-S'adi* and *Hayāt-i-Jāwīd* were written from the standpoint of scientific and critical analysis of facts and that the application of a well-defined literary standard produced in the works of most of the Urdu writers remarkable effects in moderation, sound judgment and observation.

English literature influenced Hālī and Shiblī even more than it did Sir Sayyid but none of them lost their individuality. "While Sir Sayyid cut his figure on the European pattern, Shiblī utilised the European pattern and changed it into something new." Hālī, on the other hand, "was animated by a literary spirit of consciously interpreting the past in the terms of modern knowledge".

The work on the whole is original both in theme and in treatment and can be read with great advantage by all interested in Urdu literature.

BIKRAMA JIT HASRAT

In *Communal Harmony*, a pamphlet recently published by the Indian Branch of the Oxford University Press, Mr. Percival Spear prescribes homeopathic treatment for the present disharmony:

> We should cure communal bitterness by adding a tincture of communalism itself to our institutions.

A fatal policy! The infection of communalism is now almost completely localized in the large centres of population. Mr. Spear's "cure" would introduce the poison into the very blood stream of the nation and carry it to every village in the land.

He proposes an elaborate system of communal guilds which would not only regulate the cultural life of their respective communities but have equal representation in a second legislative chamber, where any community could veto any measure by a unanimous veto of its representatives. The plan is comprehensive, even plausible in some respects, but the premises are false. It is *not true* that the communities of India differ in ideals of living, in ethics and in fundamental morality. It is not the strengthening of existing divisions and the creation of new ones that will cure communal bitterness but mutual trust and the forgoing of selfish aims in devotion to a common goal, the freedom and the well-being of the country as a whole.

Incidentally, Mr. Spear refers to "a self-governing India" but three tell-tale words show that his idea of "self-government" is not that of the Indian patriot. He suggests—save the mark!—that

> the Chief Justice might for a time, *and even permanently* [italics mine] be a judge appointed by mutual agreement between the Indian and British Governments.

PH. D.

CORRESPONDENCE

SRI *vs.* MR. AS NAME-PREFIX IN INDIA

As an honorific title of address our countrymen have, of late, been using freely the word "Sri" or its contraction "Sr", the diacritical mark upon the S (to indicate the first of the three "Sa's" of the standard Indian alphabet) often being dropped. The word is expressive, appropriate and simple; it is, in fact, written by a single diphthong (श्री) of the Devanagari alphabet. It should be adopted universally or at least more widely in view of the fact that no other common word from a related language has ever been suggested.

Several of our newspapers and periodicals have made it a policy to use an Indian title before Indian names. Journals in Indian languages almost invariably put Indian or Oriental prefixes to the names of our countrymen. The Benares nationalist daily, *Aj*, goes so far as to use the Indian prefix "Sri" before foreign names also, just as English papers would persist in using "Mr." etc. in the case of Indians too. The credit of consistently using "Sri" for nearly a quarter of a century goes to that Hindi daily: even when it issued an English paper, *To-day*, for a time, under the editorship of the ex-Minister Sri Sampurnananda, it invariably used "Sri". "Sr" as a contraction was being used in Mahatma Gandhi's *Young India* for a time about 1927-28.

The European titles of address—Mr., Monsieur, Herr, etc.—are exclusively used for an Englishman, a Frenchman or a German, respectively. Why should we Indians have no common honorific name-prefix?

Adopting "Sri" as a common name-prefix will not necessitate the exclusion of special titles like *Maulavi, Maulana, Munshi, Mahamahopadhyaya, Lala, Pandit, Thakur* etc.

The spelling of the word need not be unnecessarily cumbrous. Why not standardize the spelling as Sri instead of writing Shri or Shree? The standard transliteration does not admit of more Roman letters for our first "Sa" (श). Further, would "*Shri* Srinivasa Sastri" or "*Shri* Sri Prakasa" look or sound well? I would also suggest "Sri-sri" as the plural of "Sri".

The feminine title should continue to be *Srimati* (contraction *Sm*). "Sri (or Shri) Sarojini Naidu" side by side with "Sri Srinivasa" can never be tolerated.

In Bengal, while the feminine "Srimati" seems constant for all time, they have been using a variety of styles and spellings for the masculine title of address, such as *Sriyut, Srijut* (contractions, *Syt, Sjt* or *Sj*) for a century now, if not more. They also should adopt the standardized form.

All-India Congress Library, Allahabad. S. C. GUHA

ENDS AND SAYINGS

"_____ends of verse
And sayings of philosophers."

HUDIBRAS

The spontaneous and wide-spread expression of real sorrow at the recent passing away of His Highness the late Sri Krishnarajendra Wadiyar Bahadur, Maharaja of Mysore, was a well-deserved tribute to a conscientious ruler and a good and great man. A devout and orthodox Hindu, he was a man of broad and liberal views who urged Mosque attendance upon his Muslim subjects and for the last fourteen years had entrusted the administration of his State to the able Muslim Diwan, Sir Mirza M. Ismail. As First Chancellor of the Benares Hindu University he declared that that institution "should be Indian first and Hindu afterwards".

He was a great patron of music and of letters. His reign saw numerous beneficent projects undertaken and many reforms instituted. Its later years were clouded by political unrest among a section of his people, but for His Highness personally there was universal esteem. In his unaffected dignity as in his devotion to the interests of his people as he understood them, His Highness was every inch a King, a worthy modern representative of the ancient Indian ideal of kingship, in our time so grossly, alas, betrayed by some of his nominal peers.

During the thirty-eight years of his active reign, he did what he could, by precept and by example, to realize in his State an ideal such as he expressed six years ago for the new town of Krishnarajanagar :—

> a city that will be known, not by the number of inhabitants, nor by the magnificence of its buildings, but by the uprightness of its citizens, by the spirit of brotherhood that prevails in it, and by a spirit of cleanliness in houses and in streets, in bodies, minds and souls.

The Rt. Hon. Sir Akbar Hydari, in his Convocation Address at the Bombay University on August 20th, expressed a conviction which is being borne in increasingly upon Indians for whom the national good transcends local and party interests. It was only, he assured his audience, by fostering the essential unity which underlies the diversities of the people and of the cultures of India that self-respect could be attained and the time come when Indians "would walk the highways of their own land, conscious that they were the masters of its destiny".

No less practically important was his pointing to where the effort to achieve that unity must begin. "We cannot", he said, "bring about harmony in the relations between different communities and castes and nations unless first we realise it in ourselves."

Religious differences are frequently made the excuse for friction between the communities in India, but the orthodox of any faith who profess devotion to the Deity under whatever name while looking with disfavour or with open hostility upon adherents of a different creed will do well to ponder the following plain-spoken verse from the Christian scriptures :—

> If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar : for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?

University education, Sir Akbar declared, failed of its main purpose if it did not lead to the perception of the unity underlying the diversity, which he said was at once the Truth which religion proclaimed and the Truth which Science had come to accept. This unity, of course, is even wider than the shores of India.

Except so far as our measures are in

harmony with the highest interests of all other nations and of humanity, they are more likely to breed discord than promote peace.

Love for humanity as a whole, "the great Orphan", must certainly spread if the world's sufferings are to be relieved. As in the old fable of the war between the body and its members, the limbs fighting against each other only increase the general misery in which all the parts inevitably share. We must, as Sir Akbar said, "discipline ourselves to think in terms of humanity".

"Can Modern Science Harmonize Physics and Biological Phenomena?" asks W. F. G. Swann, Director of the Bartol Research Foundation of the Franklin Institute at Swarthmore, Pennsylvania, in that Institute's *Journal* for June. In his paper, read at the International Congress of Biophysics, Biocosmics and Biocracy, held at New York in 1939, he brings out rather strikingly the analogies between the so-called animate and inanimate and the universal operation of law.

We know of no instances in which the animate being violates the principles of mechanics, the principles of thermodynamics, or any of those other principles of natural philosophy in their control of the large scale phenomena amenable to our observation.

"It is always possible", he writes, "to take any aggregate of phenomena and harmonize them under some general scheme of law of which they form a part." All the philosophic difficulties which seem to make one branch of science inharmonious with another are rooted in the fact that certain phases of nature's activities are dominant in some problems and inconspicuous in others. In crossing the bridge between the animate and the inanimate worlds "something which was inconspicuous on one side starts to assume a rôle of vital importance on the other".

The mid-Victorian distinction between inanimate and animate—that determinism characterized the former and free will the latter—is out of favour, Mr. Swann writes. The determinists have tried to rule out free will even in human activity, while on the other hand physical scientists have found even atomic behaviour unpredictable save in aggregates—a determinism, therefore, "controlled largely by the law of averages".

Ancient Indian philosophy and science would say that the scientists were trying to erect their bridge in the wrong place. From the stand-point of consciousness there is no distinction between animate and inanimate save as vehicles of higher type permit the fuller expression of the omnipresent One Life.

Consciousness is present in every atom and the apparent exercise of free will on the part of the animal is as much guided by natural impulse as is the atomic response.

The world of Form and Existence is an immense chain, whose links are all connected. The law of Analogy is the first key to the world problem.

The complex nature of man is the bridge between determinism and free will. His vehicles obey natural impulse, subject to direction from the Dweller in the body, but that indwelling self-consciousness is of a higher order of being than the merely conscious. Its will alone is free.

War-time Bulletin No. 2 of the National Council for the Abolition of the Death Penalty in England, issued in June, brings unwelcome news. Parliament has extended the death penalty to serious cases of espionage and sabotage. A reactionary measure, nullifying the constructive efforts of more than seven decades for the steady restriction of capital punishment in Britain. Under the strain of war-time emotions, aggravated by the revelations of Fifth Column activities, acts similar to the British one have been passed also in Sweden, Switzerland and the Dutch East Indies, none of which countries had the death penalty.

Experience has clearly shown that the threat of capital punishment is less effective as a deterrent from crime than swiftness and inevitability of punishment. Countries which have abolished the death penalty have not experienced, as a rule, an increase in the number of homicides.

Those retaining it have found that the reluctance of the average jury to convict when the penalty is death results in many criminals escaping scot-free. And, as the National Council *Bulletin* points out,

> Nobody can suppose that the threat of the executioner will enable the police to uncover cases they do not discover now.

Courts, moreover, are fallible at any time. Let us not forget the finding of the Royal Commission on Capital Punishment, that over a period of forty years about one out of every twenty-five death sentences in England were pronounced against men afterward proved innocent. And what amends can be made to the dead? There is the more likelihood that innocent men may suffer when, as in cases under this new Act, the issue is confused by inflamed patriotism and by war-time hysteria.

But ineffectiveness and the possibility of irreparable injustice are not the only objections to the death penalty. Executions are brutalizing and demoralizing. The account which the *Bulletin* reproduces of a public execution in a Kentucky town, with speeches, a band and a grandstand for spectators, including school-children given a half-holiday to see the proof "that crime does not pay", is revolting in the extreme. And even when the death sentence is carried out privately, what of the effect upon the executioner? The late Robert Elliott, long the official executioner at Sing Sing Prison in the U. S. A., who had murdered at the order of the State more than three hundred men and women, was an outspoken opponent of capital punishment which, he said, "never did any good". His predecessor had suffered a severe nervous breakdown and committed suicide. Elliott, towards the end of his term, collapsed after executing a woman.

The world has had a surfeit of brutality. Let us remember our common humanity and, above the roar and crash of battle, lend an ear to the voice of Compassion!

The National Anti-Vaccination League in London sends us the story, which it published a few years ago, of a lie which vaccination enthusiasts have not scrupled to keep in circulation long after its falsity had been publicly exposed. It has been officially denied, apologized for and withdrawn, only to be started once more on its travels when needed for propaganda. A statement so spectacular seems to be too valuable to renounce merely because it happens not to be true.

"The Franco-Prussian War Lie" originated in 1872 at the Statistical Congress in St. Petersburg when one of the speakers stated that "smallpox deaths in the indifferently vaccinated French Army were 23,469, while those in the efficiently-vaccinated German Army were only 263". The lie travelled all over the world, via the columns of an obscure Russian publication, the *Wiener Medizinische Wochenschrift*, the *British Medical Journal*, the *Daily News* (London) and other papers. And yet Dr. Bayard of Paris claimed that same year that the idea of revaccination originated in France and that

> in France there are few subjects above the age of twenty years who have not been revaccinated, but all the soldiers have certainly undergone the operation.

In 1883 the fictitious figures were put in the hands of every member of the House of Commons and used with great effect in Sir Lyon Playfair's speech, "that was said to have influenced more votes than any other speech in Parliament".

In vain have both the French and German Governments been requested to confirm the figures. In France the answer was forthcoming that the army medical returns of the Franco-German war were so incomplete as not to supply the total, which could not have exceeded 6,000—a reduction of nearly 75 per cent! The German Minister of War in 1883 replied to an inquiry about the alleged 263 German deaths from smallpox that

> From the time from July, 1870, to June, 1871 (the twelve months of the war), the numbers wished for are not recorded, and regret is expressed that on this account the desired information cannot be given.

The Lancet, which published the discredited figures in 1901, apologized in its pages when the facts were brought to its attention :—

> The figures escaped our attention. We regret to have published them, as their falsity has been established.

And yet as lately as six years ago the League reported that

> The lie was repeated in a recent publication of the Reich Health Office in Berlin, and was justified by reference to a placard that appears in the office of the Paris vaccination service. It will be found in encyclopædias, and in authorative books on medicine and infectious diseases, as well as in reports from Government Departments in nearly every country.

Superstitions are notoriously hardy, medical superstitions are hardier than most and the vaccination superstition has a most tenacious hold. A recent reply by Mr. M. MacDonald to Mr. John Parker's question in the House of Commons seems, however, distinctly hopeful. Mr. Parker, the Parliamentary Report for May 29th records, asked the Minister of Health " whether steps will be taken to inoculate the civil population beginning with Civil Defence and other key workers, against typhoid, tetanus, etc., in case of the danger of epidemics following serious air raids ". Mr. MacDonald, while considering that inoculation might " in particular circumstances and for some diseases be of value " and explaining that facilities were available for anti-typhoid and anti-tetanus inoculation where required, expressed this significant opinion : " I do not think that any such general inoculation of the civilian population is practicable or indeed advisable."

A modest attempt which its philanthropic promoters hope may furnish the model for many similar undertakings in different parts of the country is that of the Adersh Swasthya Mandir (Temple of Health) which the Help Our Mothers Society has been conducting at Ujjain since September 1939. The aims and the activities of this group are reported in its brochure *Health for India's Millions* which makes a plea for concerted action to bring about adequate and uniform distribution of health facilities, including prenatal, maternity, infant welfare and pre-school care, school clinics and adult health service.

The brochure describes the activities of the Swasthya Mandir and gives detailed suggestions for setting up similar institutions wherever voluntary workers, funds and State patronage are available. The Health Centre provided free milk and cod-liver oil to expectant and nursing mothers and young children, spread the gospel of cleanliness with practical demonstrations and provided medical examinations and advice for pregnant mothers and for children. It is significant of the need for such work that over half of the 350 children examined, all of them considered by their parents to be in normal health, were found suffering from some malady calling for medical attention. It may be mentioned in passing that the value of such examinations is borne out by a Bengal Government Press Note quoted in *The Calcutta Municipal Gazette* for 27th July which declares that as a result of repeated examination of students in Government and Government-aided Secondary Schools in Calcutta, the percentage of defects among them has been appreciably decreased.

For all of these activities of the Swasthya Mandir we have nothing but praise. Unfortunately the Help Our Mothers Society has been caught by the pernicious craze for artificial methods of birth control which has wrought such havoc in the West. Self-control is the only method of birth control that does not involve the breaking of the laws of nature and invoke the inevitable penalties for such infractions. It is fundamentally immoral to seek to evade the consequences of one's acts. We stand four-square with Gandhiji on this important point, that the marital relation ought to be restricted to the perpetuation of the race. It is a fallacy as dangerous as it is untenable that self-indulgence is necessary or even beneficial to health. The sponsors of the Health Centre are to be con-

gratulated that the "number of mothers taking birth control advice remained very poor". This is a good sign and shows the intuitive perception of our Indian women.

Recreation of the right sort is necessary for a normal, well-balanced existence and deserves sympathetic encouragement from those who are working for the betterment of village conditions. The wrong type, which debases and demoralizes, does not deserve the name, being destructive instead of recreative. But there are health-giving games and dances; there is other wholesome fun which affords relaxation from the strain of workaday existence but little else besides; and there is recreation of the highest type which is both educative and uplifting, such as nature study, reading worth-while books, hearing fine music and seeing elevating dramatic performances.

We referred in our May issue to the Soviet collective farm theatres and expressed the hope of a like development for the Indian villages. It is gratifying to learn from *Indian Farming* for the same month that a beginning has been made in the United Provinces where

> young men in the rural development centres have formed their own dramatic associations and *bhajan-mandalis* which provide excellent entertainment to the public.

Rural development vans bring periodical entertainment, with their exhibits and films, to outlying districts and fifty centres within a hundred miles of Lucknow participate in a village radio scheme, the territorial limitation being due to the difficulties in servicing radio sets and batteries.

Both film and radio have incalculable possibilities for the enrichment of life but both fall so far short of realizing those possibilities at the present day that the amateur dramatic associations seem the more promising development. Moreover, the recreation which the former offer the villagers is wholly passive whereas in the village-staged play some at least get the greater benefit of participation in a recreational activity. As the movement grows and literacy spreads, plays of the right type will be in increasing demand. The rapid increase in the production of one-act plays in the Indian languages holds a great promise for the village theatre, if dramatists will only bear in mind its special needs. Prominent among its requirements is a diction which the village folk can understand, involving wherever necessary the ruthless sacrifice of rhetoric to intelligibility.

The only justification of privilege, economic or other, is as the reward for service rendered to society, or for enabling its recipient to serve society better. The sheltered leisure and the freedom from material anxiety which the creative artist needs (but, alas, so often lacks!) are his due, because in serving Beauty with a quiet mind he renders his best service to the race. Wealth and position, whether earned by present efforts or inherited by reason of past ones, are a trust for the use of which a man is answerable to his conscience if not directly to society.

Mr. W. Burns, Agricultural Commissioner with the Government of India, in "Some Thoughts on Agricultural Education" (*Indian Farming*, June 1940) recognizes the desirability of the agricultural colleges' training the rising generation of landowners of all grades—Sardars, Inamdars, Jagirdars, Thakurs etc. His citation from Sir Daniel Hall's *Agriculture after the War* is as pertinent to Indian as to English conditions:—

> There is an urgent call for the special education of our rising generation of landowners....We must recognize that they have accepted certain public obligations as attached to their receipt of rents....The landowner, if he is to retain his position, must become the leader of his tenants and the entrepreneur of his property.... The root of the evil lies in the owner's want of technical knowledge of the land. He leaves school and university without any education directed towards his future position, with a certain inherited sense of public duty but with no means of applying it to his immediate powers and obligations.

Some landowners, including a few young rulers, Mr. Burns concedes, have

had a certain amount of training in some of the provincial agricultural colleges. Only the merest beginning, however, has been made in acquainting this important class, the natural leaders of their people, with elementary botany and chemistry and with economics, especially in its bearing on such agricultural problems as marketing and co-operation.

The Indian landowner has indeed, as Mr. Burns writes, "amazing opportunities" and of him to whom much is given, much may legitimately be required.

The more spectacular qualities of India's beloved leader, to whom salutations on his birthday to-morrow, have received world-wide tribute—his selfless devotion to Truth, his fearless honesty, his singleness of aim. But through nothing does Gandhiji's self-forged simple grandeur of character shine forth more clearly than through the complete consistency of his daily practice with the ideals which he professes.

It has been the fashion with writers of the Imperialist school to picture India sitting plunged in thought while the legions thunder past, so absorbed in philosophical abstractions as to have no interest in mundane problems and to be quite incapable of coping with them. That is a caricature. India has indeed always had a deep sense of the underlying reality, but she has also known that genuine spiritual attainment inevitably reflects itself in a truer sense of values and in clearer recognition of how to deal with practical matters. In the Hindu scriptures Yoga is called "skill in the performance of action".

India has a classic example in Janaka of a great Yogi who was also a King and who discharged punctiliously the duties of his royal office without letting his concern with state-craft interfere a whit with his practice of Yoga. And Gandhiji is the living proof of the possibility of such a feat.

Shri K. M. Munshi contributes to the latest issue of *Bhāratīya Vidyā* a thoughtful and indeed an inspiring article on this theme under the title "Mahātmā Gandhi—Yoga in Action". He sketches the carefully ordered day of Gandhiji, "a self-contained epitome of a lifetime" in which work and rest, relaxation and exercise, as well as refreshment, physical and spiritual, all have their due.

> The first trait in Gandhiji which even at first sight distinguishes him from all men is the perfection of each little act of his. His papers are arranged in unimpeachable order. His short loin-cloth is worn with a fastidious care which would rouse the envy of a smartly dressed young man. His courtesy is incomparable. His chivalrous attention to women—maybe of the lowliest—would leave the accomplished far behind. The shortest of his letters has a personal touch which binds the addressee to him. His political correspondence has force and dignity which trained diplomats may covet. His tone, manner and language on all occasions is faultlessly appropriate. The appropriateness, however, is not mechanical. It has the grace of spontaneity. It has a soulful reality, which one who has devoted sympathetic attention to the occasion alone can give. The words of the *Gītā*, "Yoga is perfection in action", have come true in him.

Perhaps the clue lies in Gandhiji's reply, quoted in *Harijan* for 15th January, 1938, to the question why he put so much passion into all his talk. Because, he answered, he had yet to learn the lesson of the *Gita* to be passionless, but he added, and this is, we think, the clue also to his skill in action :—

> There is the desire to see that in whatever I am speaking about, to whomsoever I am speaking, truth—cent per cent truth—is speaking out.

ERRATUM

On page 424 (August number) instead of the National Vaccination League, read the National Anti-Vaccination League.